

Political Communication in perspective: Identifying the message of Radical Right Parties in Europe during the first decade of the 21st century: A comparative case study

Vasiliki Tsagkroni

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

The thesis aims primarily to analyse the communication strategies of radical right parties. More specifically, the research examines three cases of radical right parties in Western Europe during the first decade of the twenty-first century with particular emphasis on the political communication along with marketing and branding techniques used to engage with the electorate to gain and maintain electoral support. These case studies comprise the Greek Popular Orthodox Rally (L.A.O.S.), the Swiss People's Party (SVP) and the Italian National Alliance (AN). Different forms of content analysis are used in order to pinpoint the characteristics that identify the parties as members of the radical right family. Through this approach the thesis provides evidence that the parties, in their effort to become more appealing to their audiences, avoid direct engagement with issues, which reflect traditional ideological tenets of the radical right issues such as fascism, racism or xenophobia. Rather, they attempt to present a more mainstream and competitive profile in the political arena. From a market-oriented perspective, the thesis addresses questions on marketing and related explanations which focus both on *how* the parties choose to communicate with the electorate, *what* is their message and, through comparative analysis, whether there are similarities in communication techniques among the three parties and whether it can be argued that parties in the radical right family project a common profile in terms of their communication strategies. Furthermore, the application of such an approach to the use of political communication techniques of the selected radical right parties can contribute to a wider understanding of how the concept of 'consumption' has come to be applied increasingly in activities undertaken in the political arena.

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1. Introduction

The last forty years in Europe have seen a significant rise in support of radical right parties. The radical right was linked to the totalitarian regimes of fascism and Nazism, and after the end of the WWII, many believed that an end to such ideologies would come. However, in the years that followed, the radical right entered a period of adjustment whereby they transformed their ideology on the basis of a post-fascist agenda. Gradually, radical right parties managed to gain popularity among the electorate, and by the end of the 1970s managed to increase their presence in national political arenas. The emergence of these radical right parties constitutes a significant development of Western European political systems, in terms of 'surging political support', gaining 'legislative seats' and 'entering the corridors of government power' (Norris, 2004)

Over the last two decades, radical right parties have experienced a growth in their electoral support and for what is worth, they have also managed to turn those who have voted for the party once ('new voters') into loyal voters (creating a new voter profile) (Rensmann, 2003). This raises the question as to how such parties communicate with voters and to what extent they use political communication and marketing strategies to increase their support. Expanding on the view of Newman and Sheth (1985), who claim that understanding political marketing strategies has become increasingly important in order to understand why voters behave in the ways they do, it can be argued that political communication strategies are not just minor influences in determining voter attitudes but rather, play a major role in contributing to the parties' success.

Following the work of Lilleker (2006), Lees-Marshment and Lilleker (2005), O'Shaughnessy (2002), Norris (1999) and McNair (1995), it becomes clear that political communication tactics are well incorporated into the parties' strategy and contributing to the aim of increasing their electorate. The current research thesis centres on the impact of political communication, and additionally of political marketing and branding, and focuses particularly on the case of the radical right family. Its aim is to analyse the parties' communication tactics as a means of producing a wider appeal to sections of the electorate. Secondly, it seeks to build on a communication model which can be applied to European radical right parties as has been done by Moufahim (2007)

in the case of the political marketing of the *Vlaams Blok* in Belgium. Radical right parties in Greece, Switzerland, and Italy are the focal points of this research project. Although each party constitutes an individual case study, all three of them are used in a multiple-case design set within a comparative framework.

In the following chapters a hypothesis is developed, regarding the ways in which radical right parties adopt political communication strategies to expose themselves to the public. Furthermore, I examine in particular political marketing as a specific aspect of communication strategies that radical right parties adopt to increase their vote share. This study also examines the possibility of a common approach among parties in different European countries. Original research is imperative to establish the connection between the communication strategies of these parties' rise in support. The thesis addresses questions such as: What are the communication techniques the parties use in order to gain the wider support of the electorate? How do the radical right parties market themselves? The parties that have been selected are the Greek *Popular Orthodox Rally* (L.A.O.S.), *Swiss People's Party* (SVP) and the Italian *National Alliance* (AN).

This research focuses on one fundamental question:

- Is there a pattern, regarding communication approaches that parties from the same political family but in different countries follow?

Having said that, the hypothesis of this thesis is that parties originating in the radical right family use comparable communication strategies in order to communicate with the electorate. The research examines similarities in these strategies in the cases of L.A.O.S., SVP and AN, demonstrating that the parties adopt analogous techniques in the ways in which they communicate their message to the electorate.

Following Lin's work (2004), which attempts to interpret radical right parties' electoral strategy in marketing terms, and also, drawing on Moufahim's (2007) critical discourse analysis of the marketing of a radical right party, I attempt to analyse in depth data related to the parties' electoral campaigns and manifestos. The analysis is based on communication techniques and the market-oriented perspective that the parties' use in their attempt to connect with the voters. The selected methodology

enables identification of a pattern of political communication techniques, and the comparison of similarities and differences among the parties, which have been selected.

The choice of a comparative approach aims to clarify and examine possible patterns that are presented in marketing techniques used by the selected parties. Furthermore, emphasis is put on communication approaches, since the idea of this research argues that it is a significant tool used by parties in order to interest and attract a greater number of voters as well as to increase the share of votes.

Likewise, findings from research on the European Radical Right by Norris et al. (1999) offer additional evidence regarding my research question. Whereby parties implement various communication techniques in order to recruit their voters. Some of various communication techniques adopted in order to recruit supporters, involve advertisements in various forms of media, such as press, as well as distribution of leaflets and posters in local communities. Additionally, it is also significantly common for parties to communicate with the electorate through daily press releases, where manifestos and policies are published. Therefore, for this research project, data collection in Greece, Switzerland, and Italy the collection of information in the form of official manifestos and speeches along with websites and electoral campaign materials is a priority, aiming at analysing the parties' communication approaches. However, before examining the parties' communication strategies in particular, understanding the nature of political communication as well as addressing the concepts of political marketing and political branding is important, and finally, to identify the identity of radical right parties: what are their characteristics and ideology and what are the reasons for their electoral success over recent decades.

The concepts and practices related to rhetoric, action, and power are of great importance for forming the basis of the field of political communication. The development of political communication combines communication technologies, media communities and extended public space occurring to consolidating its position in the political field. The role of communication in recent years, in addition, challenges the way we understand democracy and public space. In constant changes where multiculturalism, political identity crisis, the crisis of political institutions and

lack of money are taking place, communication appears to be a necessity in the discourse in the political field for its existence and efficient process.

In the field of political communication, concepts and practices related to rhetoric, action, and power are central for the formation of the discipline. The vast array of available communication technologies, the availability and dispersion of media communities, as well as the expansion of public space in digital domains, advance the role of political communication in the general field of politics. Concomitantly, the rapid social and technological developments in communication practices, have affected the understanding of democracy and public space, at least in Western societies – and arguably, even beyond the boundaries of what we understand as ‘West’ in modernity. At a time when significant social changes have occurred, as a result the global economic crisis that affects both citizens (triggering, for example, emotions related to identity crisis) and political institutions, examining communication practices is necessary to understand issues and challenges that the electorate faces, and the ways political parties address them or even, respond.

Generally, political parties have increasingly used marketing techniques and branding in order to approach the electorate. Moufahim and Lim (2009) similarly in their study suggest that political marketing is the consequence of implementing marketing concepts and strategies into the process that links political parties and their voters. The influence of marketing appears to have created a sense of consumption in politics that, according to Putnam (2000), ‘enables involvement in social life, and the creation and maintenance of social relationships enriched by this consumption representing values which consumers feel unable to express through traditional channels’ (Moufahim, 2007:14).

In analysing politics in terms analogous to the marketplace, where advertising and selling are taking place, brands can help us understand the consumerist attitudes of the electorate. According to Lloyd’s (2006) theory, the political party or figure is supported by an ideology. Additionally, the brand functions to identify and comprehend the communication process that originates in offering a product to the public (Levy, 1999).

As Marsh and Fawcett (2011) suggest, understanding brand as a promise leads to

the conclusion that branding techniques create consumer equity and thus contribute to the greater uptake of a product in the market place (ibid). Similarly in my work I focus on how this technique, along with political communication approaches, contributes to the evolution of radical right parties within European political arenas. In order to locate political communication strategies in radical right parties in Greece, Switzerland and Italy. I propose to use essentially qualitative and quantitative research methods, and where appropriate, descriptive statistics to analyse diverse forms of data (for example textual information, pictures, numbers). The qualitative and quantitative research methods will be used as combining research tools, as they are both successful methods for addressing the research question and aid in increasing the reliability of results.

Regarding methodology, the selection of an approach as well as the methods employed to analyse the data, is highly important. Content analysis will be adopted to analyse the data. According to Harrison (2001) such analysis is always partly quantitative analysis, which mostly focuses on material published by parties across various media. Thus, data that will be analysed comprise of concepts, strategies, strategies, concerns and motifs, whereby their analysis enables us to examine further the language used by parties (ibid). Additionally, content analysis is employed to examine and interpret the essence of communication strategies in the case study of parties. This approach overviews the relationship between the parties, their ideology and their communication strategies and the media (Chapter 3). Data collection in this thesis encompasses a wide range of media: persuasive kinds of communication, such as political slogans, as well as posters and official documents, for example, party manifestos. As demonstrated in figure 1, the internet is widely embraced in the social life of citizens in Greece, Switzerland and Italy, considering that more than 40% of the population has internet access (2011 results). For this reason, I will also analyse digital information available online (Figure 1) (for example, material on official websites).

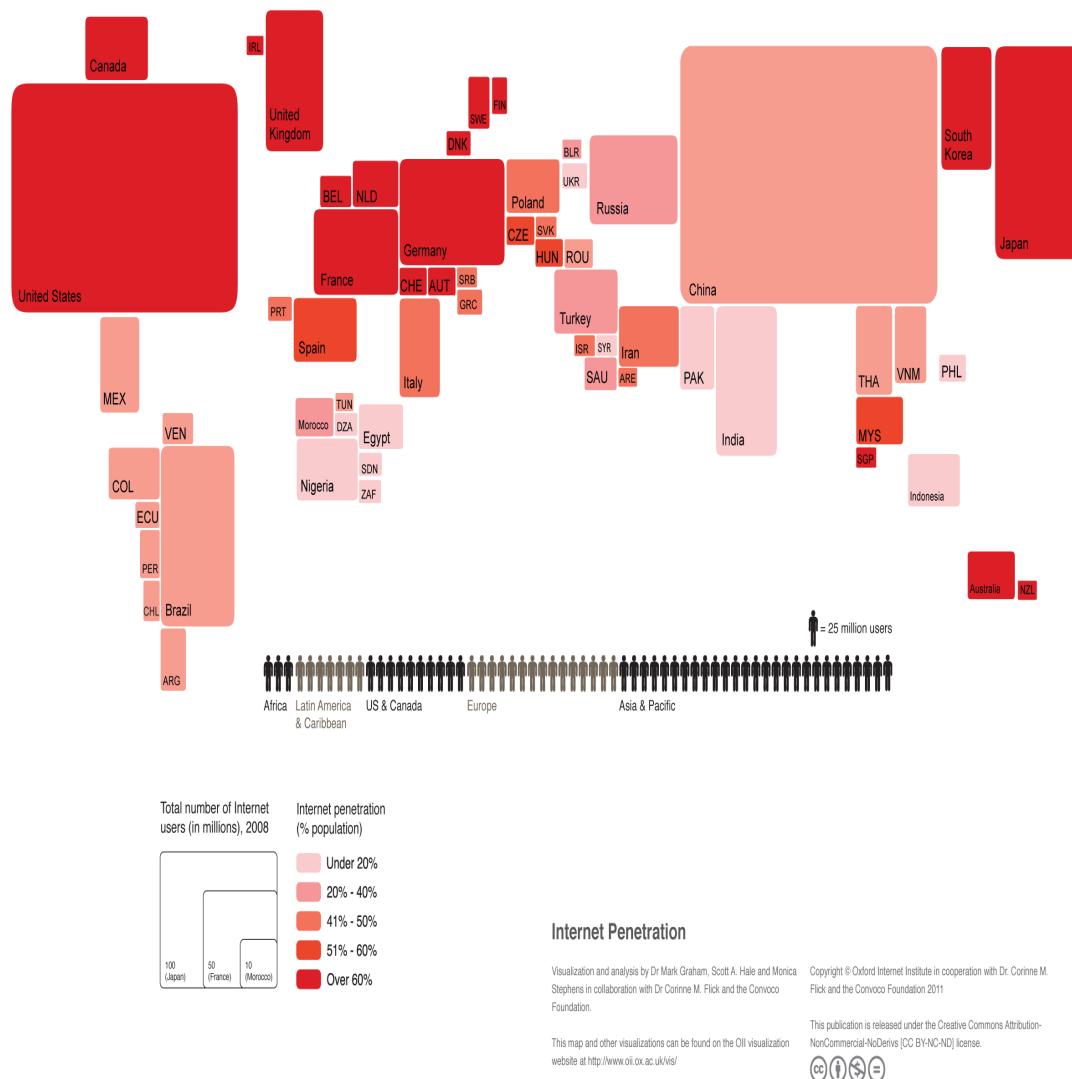


Figure 1.1: Internet Penetration: number of internet users in each country as well as the percentage of the population with internet access.

Source: Oxford Internet Institute (2011)

One of their main forms of direct and indirect communication between parties and the electorate is the internet. Moreover, the internet has become a primary source of information for citizens. For this reason, the parties aim at developing and updating regularly their official websites, through which they offer various material to the public.

Organisation of the thesis

Review of existing literature in the field (Chapter 2)

Chapter 2 is firstly an overview of appropriate written research on political communication, marketing and branding. Secondly, studies on the nature of the contemporary radical right in Western Europe are discussed. Finally, theories of communication, marketing and branding and their adaptation to the political arena are discussed. This encompasses a presentation of the radical right highlighting its complexity in terms of identification, ideology and degrees of success, which helps provide an outline of the theoretical framework of the thesis.

Methodology (Chapter 3)

This chapter discusses the methodological framework adopted for this project. Content analysis is the primary method by which the research questions as described in chapter 1 are addressed. In addition, the analysis is set within a comparative context in order to identify possible trends in behaviour in terms of the three parties' choice of communication techniques. The chapter ends with an introduction to the selected case studies and demonstrates the reasons for their selection.

Qualitative analysis of the case studies (Chapters 4, 5 and 6)

These chapters concentrate on the individual case studies of LA.O.S., SVP and AN, by exploring the background of the parties along with their structure and ideology. A qualitative analysis of the manifestos and leaders' speeches investigates how the parties may be designated as belonging to the radical right family. Along with the rhetoric of the manifestos, an analysis of electoral campaign posters and party logos is undertaken in order to understand the means used to reinforce the image of the parties and hence, contribute to their identity structure.

Content analysis of the case studies (Chapter 7)

In this chapter I offer a more quantitative approach to the data, by presenting a computer-mediated content analysis of textual materials. The aim here is to assess what ideas and policies LA.O.S., SVP and AN prioritise in their effort to attract the electorate. A comparison between the individual cases is also included.

Reflections on the analysis: Communication strategies and radical right parties (Chapter 8)

Chapter 8 addresses how the parties I examine apply the theories associated with political marketing and branding, as well as the ways they position themselves in the electoral market through their selected communication techniques. The chapter presents evidence of the market-oriented perspective of LA.O.S., SVP and AN that provides a more extensive understanding of how the parties adopt political communication strategies in order to approach and eventually achieve a connection with the electorate. By reprising major aspects of the literature review of Chapter 2, the findings from the empirical analysis in Chapters 4, 5, 6 and content analysis in Chapter 7, the discussion concludes with a response to the research questions and the hypothesis.

Conclusion (Chapter 9)

The thesis concludes with an overview of the findings of this research and its contribution to the general discussion on communication strategies of parties of the radical right family. Limitations of the techniques and propositions for future research, in relation to the three case studies and beyond, are also discussed.

2. Review of existing literature in the field

2.1. Introduction

Despite the different aims, markets and products they may have, the focus of all political parties remains access to political power. Hence, they not only attempt to acquire political power within government, but more importantly they use various communication techniques for its acquisition and maintenance. Lilleker and Lees-Marshment (2005), who have written extensively on the subject of political marketing, emphasise a market-oriented perspective. According to such a viewpoint politicians must attend to the needs of political consumers in order to design a product that they desire and which can be easily communicated and offered to them. In this case the product is how a party behaves. The following section sets out the key themes of communication tactics used by parties of the radical right. Additionally, it examines issues that are closely related to political communication, including political marketing and political branding. The aim is to identify communication tactics and their applications, prior to moving on to a more detailed examination of branding.

Radical right parties have managed not to distinguish themselves from what Fromm and Kernbach (1994) describe as ‘blowing for a general attack on the parliaments’ (in Mudde, 2007:1), and develop as a significant electoral force. Betz (1998), who worked for many years on the phenomenon of the emergence of radical right parties in Europe, explains their success as being due to their abandoning of traditional fascist ideology and the adoption of a more versatile profile combining rhetorical radicalism and figurative policies, together with a variety of political marketing techniques with which they communicate their ideas to the electorate.

The chapter concludes with an overview of the radical right in terms of its characteristics and ideology, along with a definition of ‘specific’ parties or ‘type’ of parties which constitute the radical right family and the reasons for their electoral success during recent decades. This discussion reflects on issues regarding the emergence of the radical right and the nature of its constitution as a political party family.

2.2. Communicating politics

2.2.1. Introducing political communication

Communicating political messages and persuading the public while seeking the popular support is part of the general political process. Following the work of Denton and Woodward, where political communication is described as a ‘public discussion about the allocation of public resources, [...] official authority [...] and official sanctions’ (1990:14), the current research incorporates various manifestations of ‘political language’, suggesting that it comprises not only verbal or written rhetoric but also incorporates images and symbols. From their point of view, ‘the crucial factor that makes communications ‘political’ is not the source of a message but its content and purpose’ (Denton and Woodward, 1990:11). McNair (1995), on the other hand, outlines political communication as a facilitated communication broadcast through media: ‘all forms of communications undertaken by politicians and other political actors [...] for the purpose of achieving specific objectives; communication addressed to these actors by non-politicians such as voters and communication about these actors and their activities, as contained in [...] forms of media discussion of politics’ (1995:4).

Franklin highlights the problem of clarification that surrounds the conception of political communication and states that ‘the field of political communication studies the interactions between media and political systems, locally, nationally, and internationally’ (1995:225). As pointed out by Kolovos and Harris (2005), Franklin’s approach focuses on the analysis of five basic elements that create:

a) the political content of the media, b) the actors and agencies involved in the production of that content, c) the impact of political media content on the audience and/or on policy development, d) the impact of the political system on the media system, e) the impact of the media system on the political system (Kolovos and Harris, 2005:8).

Over the years the process of political communication has evolved in a competitive environment where the better the communication tactics the more the political actors are going to be heard. This, according to Mancini (1999) is responsible

for the professionalisation of political communication in its effort to be more effective and reach a wider range of the public or claims to win over others (Moloney, 2001). In other words, communication is a means by which political actors adopt a variety of communication tactics in their effort to target and attract their audiences and eventually win their support. Having said that, the form of direct political communication involving political speeches and electoral campaign materials, has been enriched by the contribution of technology, which allows mass communication through electronic media such as television, radio and the Internet.

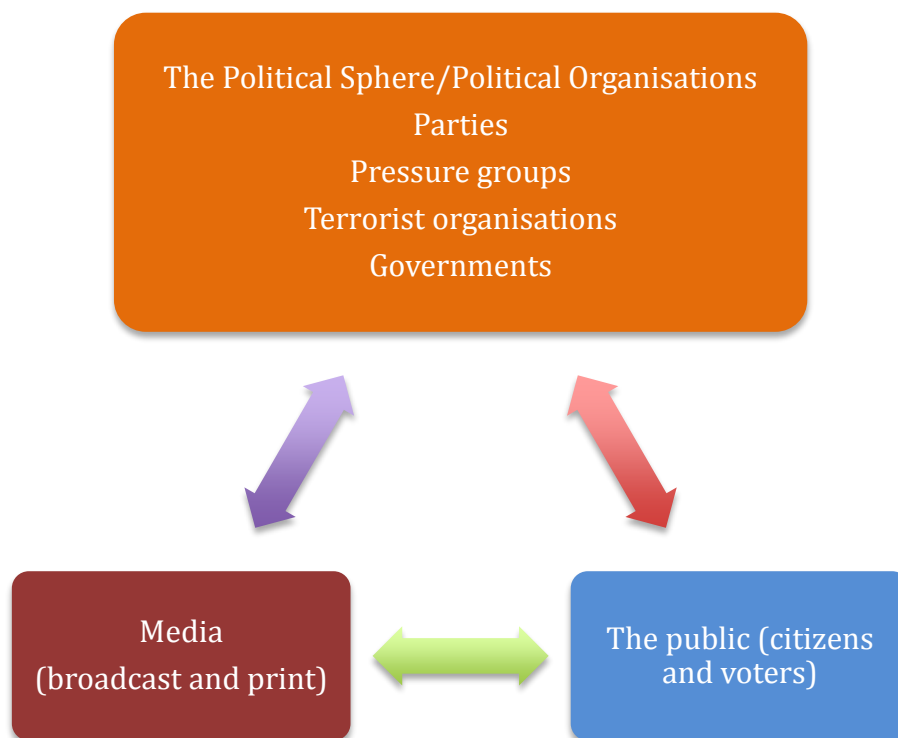


Figure 2.1: Elements/Levels of Political Communication

As noted in Figure 2.1, political communication can be described as a relationship between three actors: the political sphere, the media and the public. In theory, the lines of communication are open between each actor. As Lilleker (2006) suggests, the way communication is structured could depend on the identity of the political actor, its support or even the strategies that are used to transfer the message itself. In order to understand the purpose and the functions of communication several factors need to be examined, including the range of the messages, the content and the context of the message, and finally the nature of the communicator.

Foster (2010) explores political communication and gives an extended overview of how politicians try to communicate their political message and how parties organise their internal communication process in order to realise their political goals. By providing examples from various political arenas in recent years, Foster attempts to create an integrated spectrum of the communication strategies of political parties. This research develops Foster's approach but is specifically aimed at parties of the radical right family.

Lilleker (2006) in his 'textbook' of political communication underlines the extended range and variety of concepts around the subject of communicating political messages and provides a methodical analysis of concepts, structures and applications of political communication. According to him, some of these concepts are unique to political communication, but others can be 'borrowed' from different disciplines. Having said that, for many, political communication is a specific subject of analysis within the discipline of political marketing (Moloney et al., 2003; Dermody and Wring, 2001). However, Franklin stresses that despite examining political communication and its use in depth, it is not clear what, ultimately, distinguishes political communication from political marketing.

Additionally, Scammell stresses that 'the political communications literature tends to treat political marketing as only one aspect of broader processes' and claims that political communicators accept political marketing as 'a response to developments in media and communication technologies' (1999:720). For Scammell, this tactic responds to the idea that marketing is beyond the idea of just focusing on the needs and wishes of the electorate. As she puts it, 'political marketing is no longer a subset of broader processes: political communications become subset of political marketing, tools of promotion within the overall marketing mix' (Scammell, 1999:723). The perspective she proposes also appears to be closer to how this project uses the terms political marketing and political communication. McNair (1995), however, argues that the difficulty in defining the nature of political marketing is not the only problem, which arises. He also points out that it is ambiguous and unclear how and by what means one should measure the impact of political marketing.

Within the last few decades, evidence points to more strategic communication tactics adopted by political actors, which provides a more professionally-oriented approach to the audience. The levels of communication point to a more focused market-oriented communication using advertising and campaigning tools. This leads to a marketing perspective with a strong sense of consumer orientation. As Lees-Marshment (2001) suggests, political communication emphasises the importance of long-term communication, whereas political marketing is a broader tool 'binding together campaigning, political communication, market intelligence, product design and product promotion' (in Kolovos and Harris, 2005:9). Lees-Marshment's argument supports how this project analyses political communication and political marketing. Although the theory on political communication often focuses on the analysis of mass media, this approach is not part of this thesis. My research, as mentioned earlier, seeks to identify and record the communication techniques of radical right parties within the period of 2000-2010. The results of the comparative analysis, whether they point to similarities or differences among the selected parties, contribute to understanding the specific ways in which the political parties choose to communicate with the electorate.

For this project, political marketing is regarded as part of the communication strategy of the political parties, which aims to deliver certain messages to the audience. The key idea behind political marketing is the rise of political consumerism, which can influence the policy structure, the building of the campaign or even the internal relations within the system of a political actor. Consumption transforms ideologies, political parties and even politicians to 'products' and can provide an explanation to the developing professionalisation aspect of political communication.

2.2.2. Political marketing

[A]lmost all politicians use marketing techniques and ideas, but very few wish to admit it openly (Mauser, 1983:3)

As underlined by O'Shaughnessy (1990), the American Marketing Association (AMA) in 1960 defined marketing as 'the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producer to consumer or user'. In this application of marketing, the consumers are not being considered as a passive

audience but more as effective variables that manage to co-operate in the selling action, and this emphasis on the consumer focus is what, according to O' Shaughnessy (2002), distinguishes the marketing concept above all.

The consumer in the case of the political market concept is the voter who demands to be convinced by answers to questions like 'Why should I vote?' and 'Why should I vote for you?' (Lilleker, Jackson and Scullion, 2006:183-184). The notion of voting as political consumption according to Moufahim (2007), is based on the idea of Dermody and Scullion (2001) in which voting 'represents among other things a form of political participation, a granting of authority and a feeling of freedom' (Dermody and Scullion, 2001 in Moufahim, 2007:40). Lees-Marshment (2004) states that consumerism and politics 'interconnect at the design phase' of what is identified as the political product and 'whether it reflects the demands of those it is produced for' (2004:7). In addition, Scammell (1999) places the customer 'at the beginning rather than the end of the production-consumption cycle' (1999:725), since the satisfaction of the customer emerges if attention is brought to the customers' needs from beginning to end of the production process.

For Needham, being a consumer is equivalent to being a 'user of goods and services' (2007:29). In addition, Campbell (1987) states that consumerism offers the opportunity of a choice in the context of personalised experiences and-locates personal identity in reactions towards the proposed products, arguing that 'consumerism occupies the central place in fulfilling human desire' (2004:32). Campbell believes that in the 'process of wanting and desiring' the consumer is affirming their place in society by placing the 'authority for decision-making located firmly within the self' (2004:28-29), despite the fact that desires are socially constructed. In these terms, the understanding of choice as an empowering consumer practice offers personal acknowledgement and understanding of someone's nature by taking on 'a moral and ethical dimension' (Lilleker and Scullion, 2008:5).

Consumerism at this stage contributes the understanding of political parties voter behaviour and consumer/voter orientation and is therefore an essential element of political marketing (Scammell, 1995). Furthermore, in order to establish strong connections with voters and achieve certain political goals, parties often make use of

the consumption of political products. Also, Brownlie *et al.* propose that such consumption is now very often carried out by means of a market-oriented approach, whereby is thought to be a 'dominant force in society' (Brownlie et al. 1999 in Dermody and Scullion 2001:1087). The essence of political consumption is that the electorate engages with, and chooses from, political parties in ways similar to those involving people's interaction with commercial brands (Lilleker, Jackson and Scullion 2006). The 'emphasis on the consumer, the voter and the satisfaction of consumer wants', is what, according to Scammell, marks out political marketing from 'earlier forms of political salesmanship' (1995:8).

However, before I discuss in depth the phenomenon of political marketing, it is important first to understand what is actually meant by such a form of marketing, and how it relates to politics. In their introductory text on political marketing, O'Shaughnessy, Ormrod and Henneberg (2013) trace back the definition of political marketing in Shama's work (1976) where he defined it as 'the process by which political candidates and their ideas are directed at voters in order to satisfy their potential needs and thus gain their support for the candidate and ideas in question'. This definition, according to O'Shaughnessy, Ormrod and Henneberg, failed to address political marketing as an organisational philosophy focusing more on the efforts of political candidates attempting to satisfy the needs of the voters rather than having an extended focus on relationships (2013:10-11).

In a similar manner to Shama's interpretation of political marketing, Lock and Harris (1996) have examined it according to two different perspectives, as a discipline and as an activity. Furthermore, in the extended version of *Political marketing – vive la différence!* Lock and Harris (1996) affirmed that political marketing as a discipline is 'the study of the processes of exchanges between political entities and their environment and among themselves', while as an activity 'it is concerned with strategies for positioning and communications, and the methods through which these strategies may be realised' (1996: 22). In other words, political marketing involves exchanges and alliances between political entities along with communication techniques, which originated in contemporary commercial marketing. This is equivalent to implementing-utilisation of business marketing practices in politics, with the voter placed at the centre of such-marketing strategies.

In addition, reflecting on the marketing definitions offered above, where identifying, comprehending, communicating and distributing accurately the needs of the customer is essential, political parties through the electoral process are aiming to persuade and mobilise a part of the electorate that will eventually manage to associate with their core ideas. Hence, the political market can be understood as analogous to a commercial one, where the election is the market, the political parties are the companies and the vote is the investment (Collins and Butler, 2003). In this modified market environment the parties offer representation to customers and the customers offer their support in the form of votes (O'Shaughnessy, 2002).

Likewise, many researchers argue that the notion of political marketing is indeed susceptible to concepts of demand and supply. Hence, gaining voters' trust not only requires development and distribution of the product but also its eventual consumption by the customers (Lilleker, Jackson and Scullion 2006; Lees-Marshment 2001; Collins and Butler 2002; Clarke et al 2004; Newman 1994; Bartle 2002). O' Cass (1996) perceives the application of marketing as offering 'political parties the ability to address diverse voter concerns and needs through marketing analyses, planning, implementation and control of political and electoral campaigns' (1996:48). This application of common marketing techniques (tools, concepts, principles) to political campaigning, according to Kotler and Kotler (1999), provides for orderly, resourceful and voter-oriented planning of the campaign

[t]he use of this marketing could promote the most effective use of scarce resources, generate valuable information for both the candidate and the voters, and promote greater responsiveness in the political processes (1999:17-18)

Based on this central idea that political marketing is the use of marketing concepts and techniques in politics, my project identifies the use of concepts and techniques as part of the communication strategies adopted by parties of the radical right family through their effort to attract voters. In the frame of political marketing, the parties are in a way pursuing the electoral success that will occur through the connection they can establish with the voters (Clarke et al. 2004). The voters, on the other hand, will evaluate their selection on the basis of their own expectations and

wants. The parties, thus, need to work on the transferable information/message they communicate, for it appears to be the most valuable factor responding to the demand of satisfying the ‘needs and wants of the voter/consumer, or at the very least to satisfy them more than any other available alternative’ (Lilleker, Jackson and Scullion, 2006:5). In other words their main approach is to comprehend the needs and wishes of voters and adjust their policies accordingly. The American Marketing Association first accepted the idea of political marketing in 1985 (Wring, 1997) and its latest definition states that: ‘marketing was designed to influence target audiences to vote for a particular person, party, or proposition’ (AMA, 2007¹)

The theory of political marketing is based on a market-oriented perspective where political parties are being asked to respond to the needs and demands of society beyond a set period of time. This means that the parties should focus on the needs and wants of the voters not only during an election period but continuously, being in a so-called ‘permanent campaign’ (Nimmo, 1999; Kotzaivazoglou, 2010, Henneberg, 2004, Needham, 2007). In these terms, the aim of political marketing is to influence party policies and political behaviours so that political parties establish long-term relationships with the electorate (Henneberg and O’ Shaughnessy, 2007). Beyond such theory, what is effectively experienced, as political marketing is the adaptation of politicians’ essential actions to a code of practice that ensures optimal communication between voters and political parties. (O’ Shaughnessy, 2001; Lees-Marshment, 2009a). Reflecting further on Lock and Harris’ work, ‘political marketing is concerned with communicating with party members, media and prospective sources of funding as well as the electorate’ (1996: 21), whereas Wring (1997) argues that ‘the party or candidate’s the use of opinion research and environmental analysis to produce and promote a competitive offering which will help realise organisational aims and satisfy groups of electors in exchange for their votes’ (1997:653).

In reaction to the disengagement of a large proportion of the electorate from political participation, the parties, according to Blumler and Kavanagh (1995), turn for help to professional campaigners in order to gain the attention of voters and maximise their influence. Reflecting on the idea of trading between voters and political parties, it

¹ <http://www.marketingpower.com/Community/ARC/Pages/Additional/Definition/default.aspx>, last accessed December 2013 This should be in the bibliography rather than a footnote.

can be argued that ~~the~~ voters consider and measure their choice, based on how to increase their personal profit (Heath et al. 2001), while parties rely on their ability to react and provide a fulfilment and satisfaction on voters' wants (Lilleker, Jackson and Scullion, 2006). It is based on this principle, that the parties associate with marketing approaches in order to identify the concerns of the electorate and gradually modify their behaviour in a way that will lead them to effectively communicate their product under offer and meet the demands of the electorate (Lilleker and Lees-Marshment 2005). For Farrell and Wortmann (1987) the exchange takes place during the election period when, the sellers 'market their particular styles of representation and specific intentions for government as a product which comprises party image, leader image and manifesto proposals' (Henneberg 2002:100).

Similarly it can be argued that the parties choose to spend a considerable amount of their annual budget on political advertisements targeted at reversing the passiveness and apprehension of the voters, under the guidance of professional consultants with marketing expertise, in the procedural planning of their campaigns (Schneider, 2004; O'Shaughnessy, 1990, Moufahim, 2007). At this point, political marketing and political campaigning are undertaken as the techniques by the means of which the parties manage to reach, inform, communicate and, in the end, through persuade the electorate (Baines, Harris and Lewis, 2002). For Moufahim (2007), this need to react to the apathy and distrust towards the political system together with 'the perceived success that marketers have had in connecting with fickle consumers' (Moufahim, 2007:44), could contribute to the utilisation of marketing techniques and perceptions in politics.

Over and above this, Lees-Marshment (2001) emphasises that use of marketing in politics refers to the technique whereby political parties administer various business and marketing tools such as campaigning, in order to gain power. Along with this thought, political marketing 'must replicate most of the processes involved in consumer marketing-research advertising personal selling product management' (O'Shaughnessy, 1990:17). As Lilleker, Jackson and Scullion (2006) emphasise, the marketing approach has replaced political ideologies, and politics is being operated in a form of responding to the needs and the 'wants' of the electorate; the political 'product' is the platform of the party, which can be located in parties' manifestos,

where policies and consensual objectives are being included (Newman, 1994, Bartle 2002, Lees-Marshment, 2001, Henneberg and Eghbalian, 2002:68), along with the 'image' of the party (Bartle, 2002:41). Butler and Collins (1994, 1999) argue that the political product includes a 'multicomponent' offer (that includes party, person, ideology), a degree of loyalty and the ability to transform. In addition, for Lees-Marshment (2003) the party's product is its behaviour where the product can include a variety of segments, from leadership, to party members and even symbols. On the other hand, Kotler (1982) suggests, that the candidate or the political party should exhibit look and behaviour that the voters find attractive. In this project, this argument will play a significant role in directing the research, as the aim is to compare marketing techniques with the original ideology of the parties and where this ideology stands in terms of gaining the support of the electorate.

In order to be able to respond to the marketing needs that a political party may have seeks the help of a marketing company in terms of 'determining the needs and wants of target markets and delivering the desired satisfactions more effectively and efficiently than competitors' (Kotler, 1991:17). Furthermore, for Lees-Marshment (2001) the political parties try to create and develop a product that can attract the attention of the voters. Having said that, the parties are required to provide a political programme that is committed to satisfying the needs of the electorate, both existing members and potential voters. This requires an awareness of the existing competition in the electoral market and the product offered by fellow competitors (Kohli, Jaworski and Kumar 1993; Narver and Slater 1996) and in the end, the quality of the product on offer becomes the decisive factor of the prosperity of the company.

As expressed in O' Shaughnessy's book, *The Idea of Political Marketing* (1990), political marketing is seeking to create and establish long-term relationships with the electorate. This can be achieved through a shared trading and 'fulfilment of promises' (O' Shaughnessy 2002; Henneberg and Eghbalian 2002). In other words, political marketing should reproduce practices that can be traced back to commercial marketing, e.g. market research, advertising and management, among others (Lilleker and Lees-Marshment, 2005; O' Shaughnessy 1990; Henneberg 2002).

For Newman (1999), the main intention of a political party is to persuade votes to support it. In order to achieve that, a use of marketing research needs to be conducted with the objective to identify the wants of the voters. After this stage, the development of the product linked to the voters; concerns and wants, takes place before the final stage of promoting it in an appealing way in order to be consumed by the electorate. Therefore, political marketing 'represents a qualitative change in the nature of "state of the art" campaigns' (Harrop, 1990:286) and is more than just advertising and speeches. Rather it is a representative outline of the party's placement in the electoral market. Kotler's (1982) approach claims that 'the new methodology is not just the introduction of marketing methods into politics but an increased sophistication and acceleration of their use' (in Henneberg 2002:97), when Kavanagh (1995) proposes a more media-oriented perspective. For Kavanagh, political marketing is a combination of strategies meant to understand the need of the electorate and-create a campaign communication that will be assessed always in relation to the electorate's reactions.

Many definitions of political marketing have been attempted by different disciplines, but still it is considered a new topic theory, which is at an early development stage. Scammell (1999) underlines the difficulty of offering a consensus definition of political marketing, due to the fact that it 'shares with history the desire to explain political leaders' behaviour, shares with political science the desire to understand the political processes and shares with political communication an interest in the art of persuasion' (in Kolovos and Harris, 2005:4). Lock and Harris, however summarise that political marketing is at a 'craft' stage and they conclude that the assumption that there is direct transferability of mainstream marketing theory to political marketing is 'questionable' (1996:16). Having said that, for Lock and Harris political marketing needs to embrace the existing commercial marketing literature and develop its own techniques, focusing on communication approaches, 'the methods through which these strategies may be realised, including the search for information into attitudes, awareness and responses of target audiences' (Lock and Harris, 1996:22). This is, an approach that seems to focus on value trading.

Additionally, Maarek describes political marketing as 'a complex process, the outcome of a more global effort implicating all factors of the politician's political communication' (1995:2), and underlines that 'political marketing' is 'the general

method of political communication’, ‘one of its means’ (1995:28); it ‘encompasses the entire marketing process, from preliminary market study to testing and targeting’ (Maarek, 1995:2).

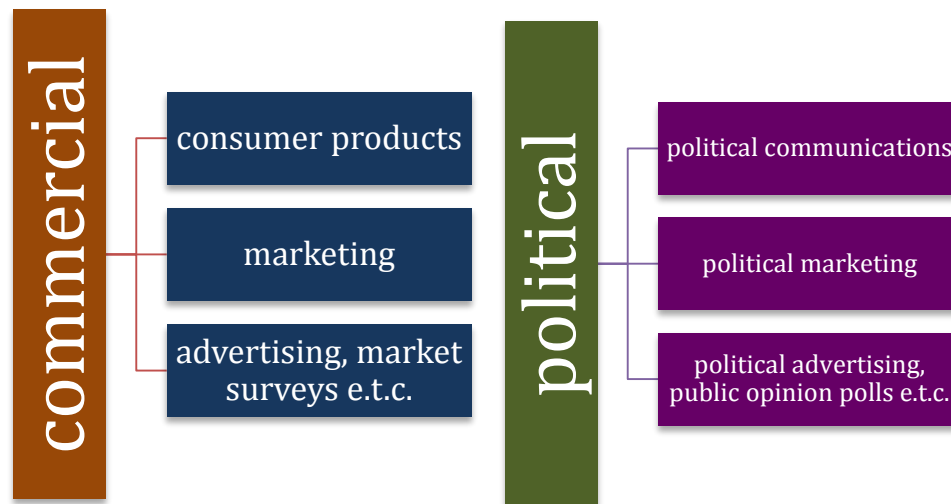


Figure 2.2: Commercial and political marketing: two parallel strategies (after Maarek, 1995:28)

A question that arises from this figure is the association of the consumer’s product to political communication. The product in the case of the political marketing is not the political communication itself but might be allocated in the party manifesto, where there is a grounded presentation of proposed policies. Alternatively, it can be recognized in the figure of the party leadership or the political candidates in general (see Butler and Collins, 1994 and 1999).

For Lilleker, Jackson and Scullion (2006) marketing cannot only be oriented around the identification of basic needs and wants, but should also be able to locate the factors that motivate voters in relation to politics. In addition to that, based on the argument of Lees-Marshment (2001) on the *ad hoc* adaptation of marketing techniques by the political parties and politicians, Moufahim argues that this form of application of political marketing reflects the ‘widely acknowledged problems of engagement with the formal political system (2007:43).

As seen above, for several researchers political marketing is examined as a merging between marketing and politics, predicated on the penetration of marketing into politics; an approach that helps in the wider understanding of the behaviour of political parties. And although several differences between commercial and political marketing can be easily spotted (see Lock and Harris, 1996), the similarities between the two cannot be over-emphasised either (see Harrop 1990, Scammell, 1995, Lees-Marshment, 2001).

Henneberg (2004) identifies six main developments as an example of applications of political marketing. According to him, political marketing can be found in the sophisticated approach of communication and spin' (Kavanagh, 1995; Lees-Marshment, 2001); in strategies working on 'product and image management' (Scammell, 1995; Newman, 2001; Baines, Harris and Lewis, 2002); in 'news-management such as the access to free media'; in 'more coherent and planned political marketing strategy development' (Butler and Collins, 1999; Kotler and Kotler, 1999; Lees-Marshment, 2001; Henneberg, 2002); in an 'intensified and integrated use of political market research' and finally in the 'emphasis on political marketing organisation and professionalization' (Lees-Marshment, 2001 in Henneberg, 2004:6-7). Following the work of numerous researchers over the years, Henneberg (2004) manages to outline a selection of works in order to provide a better understanding of the transformation of political marketing from theory to practice.

2.3. Political Branding: A definition

Having identified the key themes of political communication and its relationship to the specific issue of marketing, this section of the chapter provides an examination of another aspect of political communication: the brand. Brands are recognised to be key elements in marketing, and increasingly are seen as being central to political parties' appeal to the electorate. Although their significance to marketing is clear, the study of branding applied to the political context is something that has been developed only comparatively recently (Lock and Harris, 1996; Needham, 2006; Smith and French, 2009; Scammell, 2007).

The word brand literally means a trademark, analogous to a mark of identification using a red-hot iron stamp in order to leave an indelible mark (see Oxford English Dictionary²). In commercial marketing the word 'brand' reflects the way companies emulate their trademark in the products they produce. But for McDivitt (2003) a brand is more than just an identifier. By comparing a brand to a seed McDivitt argues that the brand needs to 'be designed, positioned and driven to grow' (2003:13). Based on this thought, branding is recognised as a process of 'creating identity for a product; in other words, creating consumer equity and thus contributing to the greater uptake of a product in the market place' (Basu and Wang, 2009:78). In addition, Hart and Murphy (1998) suggest that branding highly depends on not only the development but also the preservation of various attributes and values of the product. Furthermore, they describe such values as coherent, appropriate, distinctive, supportable and appealing to consumers. In the end, the brand is the way through which a company tries to establish a trust and loyal relationship among its consumers and tries to communicate its values through any possible form of contact with consumers (Cleaver, 1999).

Having said that, understanding and learning to identify the brands is not something simple. In the creative process of branding, several elements can combine to constitute a brand. As Clifton and Simmons (1996) note, the visual 'distinctiveness' of a brand can take many forms - a name, letter, number, symbol, signature, slogan, colour, particular typeface, or even more complex and abstract such as company, a means of identification or a service (1996:15-16). All these elements aim to identify the proposed services/goods of a company/seller and to 'differentiate them from those of competitors' (Kotler, 1991:442). Moreover, Keller (1993) detects brand knowledge in memory and as reversed by consumer's ability to recognise the brand under different circumstances, an approach that reflects the production stage of the brand.

Continuing his work on political communication, McNair (1995) proposes that effective communication always relies on strategy, such as a 'positioning statement'. This approach mainly involves an analysis, which seeks to answer the questions of what is the purpose behind the creation of the brand, who is addressed by

²<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/brand>, last accessed January 2014

it, and what are the reasons that make it more attractive in comparison to the other existing ones. In politics, branding can be identified in different areas, such as electoral campaigning and party politics. For March and Fawcett (2011) branding and politics converge in these areas to include products and services that are used within government, countries and states, political parties and even public policies. Their work follows each different feature of branding and offer examples along with- theory, in order to produce an analysis of the relationship between politics and branding in context. When it comes to a brand several factors are involved in order to achieve a successful result. According to Holt and Douglas (2004), a brand comprises four primary types: companies, the culture industries, intermediaries and customers. In addition, a brand is constructed in order to motivate the imagination of the potential customer in an effort to create a bond between them.

Consumers react to brands that embrace their ideals and correspondingly use the brands in order to express their wants and beliefs. The challenge for the producer of the brand is to manage to highlight the specific characteristics with which the consumer can identify. Clifton and Simmons give a broader explanation of how brands work. According to them, brands offer the consumers a choice among a wide variety of products while influencing customers' choices at the same time.. Another explanation of how brands work can be found in the effect of psychology and economics..Choosing one brand among many can be justified by whatever sets of ideas, feelings and attitudes the consumers have before making their choice a specific product (Levy, 1999; Holt and Douglas, 2004). In short successful brands are the ones that meet the expectations of those who buy them, or the ones that

[r]epresent a promise kept. As such they are a contract between a seller and a buyer: if the seller keeps to its side of the bargain, the buyer will be satisfied; if not, the buyer will in future look elsewhere (Clifton and Simmons 1996:18)

The idea is to create a unique brand in the eyes of the consumers since its success depends on how effectively the brand differentiates among others. (de Chernatony, 2001; Cwalina and Falkowski, 2008).

Political parties have increasingly used marketing techniques such as branding in order to influence the electorate. If we consider politics as analogous to the marketplace, where advertising and selling take place, brands can help in the understanding of the consumerist attitudes of the electorate. However, there is a need to identify and understand the communication process that goes on in offering a service to the public in the context of politics, 'political parties thus embrace the importance of their brands for the relationship between themselves and voters' (Schneider and Ferié forthcoming). Behind a political party or figure stands an ideology that is familiar to the voters. The study of branding techniques falls within research on the consumerisation of electoral behaviour, ultimately aiming at the professionalization of party campaigning. For Lilleker (2006), brand in political values is primarily communicated through the name, which can be symbolic, or the logo that can represent what the party stands for; further to this, messages and behaviour can signify what the brand stands for. Similarly, Levy (1999) argues that the brand is beyond a name, a logo or a slogan. More like a complex combination that manages to represent a variety of ideas what the nature of the product is, and what it stands for (Levy, 1999).

Furthermore, according to Keller (2002) 'branding principles have been applied in virtually every setting where consumer choice of some kind is involved' (2002:151). Following this thought, the author concludes that due to the emergence of the practice of branding in various cases, 'brand theory and best practice guidelines need to be refined to reflect the unique realities of those settings' (2002:171). Tactics originated in commercial marketing have been applied to politics as explained above (Lock and Harris, 1996; Butler and Collins, 1999; O'Shaughnessy, 2002; Henneberg, 2004, Lees-Marshment 2001; Newman 1994). Organising political campaigns based on market orientation along with political advertising (Shah, McLeod, Friedland and Nelson, 2007), political branding offers an additional perspective about marketing practices and the application of consumerism in politics. 'Differentiation between competing offerings'; as such, branding 'can play a critical role in directing consumer preference and choice'. (Kapferer, 2004 in French and Smith, 2008:461).

The way a brand performs is like a system of identification (Lloyd, 2006). As O'Shaughnessy and Henneberg argue, political brands have three distinctive features,

a so-called ‘trinity’ where the party is examined as the brand, the politician as its perceptible appearance, and policy as its provided service (see Marsh and Fawcett, 2011). Understanding branding as a major communication technique, this dissertation works on classifying the brands being used by radical right parties, analyses their content and context and places them into the spectrum of political marketing and political communication strategies of these specific political families. The use of brands is what makes a crucial difference and distinguishes policies, politics and ideologies among political parties. In this case, the establishment of a model of communication could verify the presence and political success of the parties under examination

Viewing political marketing theory and its principles in relation to political practice, this project applies a content analysis approach to the marketing of a specific political party family, the radical right. To understand and identify the communication techniques of the selected case studies, this project adopts a critical approach towards the nature of political rhetoric and campaigning strategies. However, before presenting the proposed methodological approach used in this study and before analysing the data, it is necessary to define and characterise the nature of the radical right. This will be the focus of the ensuing section of the chapter.

2.4. Researching the radical right

2.4.1. The problem of definition

The radical right appears to have strengthened after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of socialist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe. After the 1980s and especially since the 2000s, radical right parties have achieved significant degrees of success in numerous European countries e.g. France, Belgium, Austria, Netherlands, and Italy. During this period radical right parties have managed to establish a position for themselves in their national political arenas, and participated in coalition governments i.e. in Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, Italy. For Betz (1998) the radical right is ‘one of the most significant signals of a fundamental transformation of politics in advanced Western societies’ (1998:3).

Following the collapse of communism, the eternal enemy is replaced in the radical right rhetoric with a new ‘national risk’, the globalised and multicultural society (Tsiras, 2011:18). These changes have influenced the way the parties construct their arguments by creating new approaches based on xenophobia, and by appropriating slogans and concepts that were previously identified with left ideologies (e.g. welfare state), and by transforming them into new tropes (e.g. welfare chauvinism). The third wave of radical right parties (see historical background below) emphasises the importance of ‘external threats’ (e.g. the U.S., the world market) and ‘old’ and ‘new’ enemies of the nation state (e.g. Muslims, immigrants, refugees) that threaten its national sovereignty and disturb its national-cultural homogeneity (see Georgiadou 2008, 89-90). Camus (2002) determines the success of the parties according to their ability to reform and reinvent themselves, which defines them as a result of contemporary socio-political developments (Camus, 2002 in Moufahim, 2007:22).

One of the main characteristics of the third wave of the radical right, is their variety in terms of ideology (see Hainsworth (2004) ‘complex alchemy’ and the diversity that characterise the parties that compose the radical right party family, from nationalist and authoritarian parties like the *Republikaner* in Germany and the Belgian *Vlaams Blok* to more liberal ones in Scandinavia, or racist ones like the *British National Party*. The wide range of the political spectrum of the radical right contains parties that talk in favour of a liberal economic market and against income redistribution, but are in favour of welfare chauvinism (see Betz, 1994; Andersen and Bjorklund, 1990) and against the idea of a multi-cultural society.

Furthermore, it is also important to mention that analysis of the radical right has several limitations, whereby it is troublesome to both define and identify which of the parties actually do belong to the radical right family. Therefore, it is crucial to recognise and understand the specific terminology that is used in the research of these parties, as each of the terms signifies the specific aspects of the parties’ programmes. Additionally, this reflects back to the general discussion about the on-going disagreement among scholars in relation to terminology and its definitions (Hainsworth, 2000; Anastasakis, 2000; Mudde, 1996). Moreover, von Beyme was the first one to emphasise the difficulty in identifying a common ground for these parties

in 1988 (Ignazi, 2003). In the studies that followed, the majority of researchers pointed to this problem of definition and gave further explanations for the usage of the term.

As Mair and Mudde (1998) underline, in order for someone to examine the party family two approaches should be followed; one based on societal cleavages following Rokkan's framework, and the other on the ideological criteria suggested by Duverger (see Rokkan, 1970; Duverger, 1951; von Beyme; 1988).

[T]hough formal definitions or derivations based on the history of ideas largely failed to provide a convincing concept for right-wing extremism research work on political parties of the right has not had serious problems in selecting appropriate cases (von Beyme, 1988:3)

Following von Beyme's (1988) argument, the elements in order to identify a party family identity can be detected in the name of the party or *inter alia* on the basis of the voter's impression of manifestos, leader's speeches, posters and press releases. In von Beyme's classification, ideology appears to play an indirect role, mainly in the form of the voters' perception of the party. Gallagher *et al.* (1995), however distinguish three criteria which can be used in the identification of a party family 'genetic origin, transnational federations and policies (1995:181). In practice, Gallagher *et al.*'s analysis, when applied to the radical right family, appears to be rather vague since a) despite the fact that there was a rise of numerous radical right parties in Western Europe in the 1980s, the parties were not simply an explicit characteristic of this period; b) the transnational federation criterion is more or less effective when applied to small parties, like the radical right parties in the 1980s; and finally c) although the criterion on policies seems the most applicable, care should be taken in order to avoid generalisations based on the assumption that a similarity in policies signifies a similarity in cross-national comparability (see Mudde, 2002). Correspondingly, for Ignazi (2003) some researchers in order to be able to examine the radical right family identify specific 'traits' so that parties that share these 'traits' might be identified as members of this political party family. Ignazi (2003) provides examples of citations that adopted this principle, like the one by Backes and Jesse (1993) that underlined the antidemocratic character of radical right parties, and the one by Betz (1994) regarding the rejection of socio-cultural and socio-political systems' (Betz, 1994 in Ignazi, 2003:27) Fennema (1997) highlighting the nationalism and anti-

parliamentary attitudes of the parties. Similarly, Mudde (2000, 2002) proposes five features that are treated as common traits by most of the researchers. These are xenophobia, nationalism, racism, anti-democracy and strong state.

Mudde (1996) in the *War of Words Defining the Extreme Right Party Family*, calculates that in the existing literature on the radical right, there are twenty-six different approaches regarding the definition that accordingly contain at least fifty-eight separate criteria. Additionally, Anastasakis (2000) offers a thorough presentation and analysis of the existing literature on the topic. Among others terms like: *radical right* (Minkenberg 1998; Kitschelt and McGann, 1995; Merkl and Weinberg, 1997), he (Anastasakis) addresses the various terms that have characterised the right wing movements, such as *extreme right* (Hainsworth, 2000; Ignazi, 1996; Pfahl-Traughber, 1993), *right* (Betz and Immerfall, 1998), *right-wing populism* (Eismann, 2002; Decker, 2000), *neo-fascist*, *mimetic or nostalgic fascism* (Griffin, 1993) *populist*, *common man protest*, *poujadist*, *ultra right*, *far right* (Marcus, 2000; Jungerstam-Mulders, 2003), *new populism* (Taggart, 2000, Lloyd, 2006), *ethno-nationalism* (Rydgren, 2005), *anti-immigrant* (Fennema, 1997, Gibson, 2002) and many more which have been used in order to emphasise the specific elements of the radical right. This leads to the difficulty in terms of classification based on 'organisational complexity and ideological heterogeneity' (Anastasakis, 2000:5). Such classification, moreover, evolves from the mobilising nature of the parties (Mudde, 2000), since the parties change along with the demands of the electorate.

It is difficult to conclude what the radical right stands for and to decide on a commonly accepted term to describe it. Nonetheless, several terms have been used to relate to similar parties of the first and second wave of the radical right. The term extreme right began to become popular among scholars during the 1960s and 1970s. However, it is still not clear what are the exact differences between the extreme and radical right. Thus, in order to clarify this aspect, a further revision is needed. Ignazi (2003), however emphasises that the term 'radical right' was firstly introduced in the pioneering study *The Radical Right* by Daniel Bell (1963). Also, Mudde (2002) points out that such term was commonly used in the American tradition, yet its meaning differs significantly from that used in the European literature. Moreover, Mudde

(1995) proposes that in fact ‘unequivocal definition’ of the radical right does not exist while various approaches have been taken in order to define and explain it. Therefore, it appears to be appropriate to agree with von Beyme’s (1988) point of view, whereby a common theory cannot be developed - only typologies.

Seymour Martin Lipset (1960) refers to extremism as a rejection of the pluralism which represents liberal democracy. For March and Mudde (2005) extremism as opposed to radicalism argues against the values and practices of democracy and therefore extremists are seen as undemocratic in comparison to radicals who accept forms of liberal democracy. A further dimension concerns the populist approach. The central concept of populism is that we should place our trust in the common sense of the ordinary people to find solutions to complicated problems.

Mudde (2004) explains populism as ‘an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, the pure people versus the corrupt elite, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volente generale* (general will) of the people’ (2004:543), while for Betz (1998) and Eatwell (2000) the main belief behind populism is the idea of measuring social value in relation to individual social contribution. Populism rejects the established system and supports the idea of the many (people). The term populism underlines more of a political attitude where mobilisation of the electorates based on popular dissatisfaction, is the aim of the parties.

Pfahl-Traughber (1993) takes a somewhat different approach, taking populism to describe those ‘modernising right wing parties which appeal to resentments, prejudices and traditional values and offer simplistic and unrealistic solutions to socio-political problems’ (in Ignazi, 2003:29). Finally, Kitschelt (1995) defines populism as a subcategory of the ‘new radical right’ in those ‘populist anti-statist appeals which are primarily directed against big government and the political class that dominates a country’s politics through the conventional parties’ (1995:21).

For Mudde (2002) most of these definitions of populism barely contrast in content from definitions of radical right. Nonetheless, many scholars have chosen to adopt numerous terms in order to describe these political parties (Hainsworth, 2008).

However as Eatwell underlines, in an environment where other political families can be identified by their name e.g. Communists or Greens, the parties which have originated in the radical right family appear to be ‘extensive and cannot be summed up in a single identity’ (Eatwell, 2000:410). For Georgiadou (2008) the distinction between radical and extreme right contains an understanding that radicalism cannot be extreme, underlining the fine distinction between these two terms. In addition, Ignazi (2003) finds the term of new right equally vague because it does not reflect the radical context of the parties and, therefore, does not consider populism an explicit characteristic of the right.

In this research, the preferred term used to describe the parties involved is radical right. The thesis recognises the boundaries between radical, extreme and populist as fluid and contested rather than fixed. The specific term ‘radical right’ is chosen because it characterises the political parties of the period under examination in a more precise manner, and gives a better explanation of their presence and position in the political arena, their party ideology and attitude towards the political system. The term radical right will be used to refer to the sections of the extreme right that encourage views which are conservative in terms of the traditional left-right scale (Plotke and Bell, 2001). Based on these criteria, radical right parties across Europe have had significant electoral success in recent years (i.e. the Danish and Norwegian *Fremskrittspartiet*, the Danish *Dansk Folkeparti*, the Austrian *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, the Swiss *Schweizerische Volkspartei*, the Belgian *Vlaams Blok*, the French *Front National*, the Italian *Lega Nord* and *Alleanza Nazionale*, as well as the Greek *Laikós Orthódoxos Synagermós*, and several others within the European continent (Betz, 1993).

2.4.2. Historical background

Over the last few decades the radical right has become a popular topic of the research in political sciences, mainly due to its increasing success across Western Europe. Moreover, the emergence, electoral success and recent rapid growth of radical right parties on the political arena of several countries in Western Europe has led to the crucial change in the political establishment of these countries (Betz, 1993). Many scholars have argued the post-war phenomenon of radical right appearing in so-called

‘waves’ (von Beyme, 1988; Mudde, 2000; Georgiadou, 2008). This wave metaphor points to an effective explanation of the radical right phenomenon based on the post-WWII chronology of radical right development to date.

The first wave started between 1945 and 1950. As von Beyme (1988) underlines, just after the termination of the Second World War, a small number of radical right movements were shaped not only in countries where fascism had achieved a notable degree of success, e.g. Germany and Italy, but also in countries with a traditionally democratic background, such as the Scandinavian ones. These movements focused on ‘reviving interwar fascism’, although officially they opposed the idea of re-establishing Fascism or Nazism, by ‘adopting conformity to representative democracy’ (Georgiadou, 2008:86). These parties experienced limited electoral success, and were mainly supported by eccentrics and those who lost out on Second World War (Milza 2002; Georgiadou, 2008; Mudde, 2002; Betz, 1998; Hainsworth, 2000). For Minkenberg (1994), the first wave of the radical right although supporting the democratic system, rejected the idea of re-establishing the state, without though denying the potential use of force where indicated. Moreover, they collaborated in order to destabilise the democratic system, but their efforts were unsuccessful which led to their fading out just before the 1970s.

A representative example of the first wave is *Movimento Sociale Italiano* that was formed in 1946 as a descendant of the fascist institution of *Repubblica Sociale Italiana* of 1943 (see Milza, 2004). Similarly in Germany, in 1950 the *Deutsche Konservative Partei* was founded by national-conservatives and neonazi supporters (see Ignazi 2003) along with the *Sozialistische Reichspartei Deutschlands*, which was founded in 1949 but was eventually banded by the Federal Constitutional Court in 1952 (see Kitschelt and McGann, 1995; Milza, 2004; Georgiadou 2008; Tsiras, 2011).

The second wave of the radical right commenced around in 1955 and lasted nearly until the late 1980s. This wave was referred to as a populist protest movement (von Beyme, 1988) formed by the people who were not benefited by the post-war economic renovation. The parties of this period, according to Kitschelt and McGann (1995), started developing in a post-industrialist environment and were contemplated as an authoritarian reaction to the post-materialism of the libertarian left and a mirror

image of the emerging New Left. The focus of the parties of the second wave was mainly on anti-tax and anti-bureaucratic policies. The economic crisis of the 1970s, followed by an economic recession along with growing immigration to the industrial countries of Western Europe, and above all the weakness of established political parties to express and react to social problems (e.g. unemployment) contributed to the emergence of the radical right parties of the second wave (Georgiadou, 2008:87-89; Tsiras, 2011:42). As Ignazi (1996) underlines, the rhetoric of the parties of this period introduced an emphasis on issues related to the nation, security and cultural identity, but nevertheless the parties acknowledged the supremacy of representative democracy, an approach that reflected the legitimacy of radical right parties during that period in the eyes of the electorate.

The most recognisable political parties of the second wave are the Progress parties in Scandinavia. In 1972 Mogens Glistrup, in Denmark, launched a newly formed party called *Fremskridtspartiet* (Progress Party). The party rapidly increased in popularity as a party of protest by adopting liberal political and economic rhetoric. Its basic proposal was to reduce taxes and cut government costs. In 1973, in Norway *Fremskrittspartiet* (Progress Party) was founded by Anders Lange, more as a protest movement against high taxes, subsidies and state intervention rather than a typical political party. The inspiration for the foundation of the party came from the unexpected success of the *Fremskridtspartie* in Denmark (see Bjørklund and Andersen, 1999; Kitschelt and McGann, 1995; Hainsworth, 2000; Georgiadou, 2008; Betz, 1994, Ignazi, 2003). The parties managed to adjust to the new social challenges and demands by abandoning anti-statism tactics and transforming nation-introversion to national-chauvinism. This led on to the third wave of the radical right.

Since the 1980s, a third wave of radical right activity has begun under circumstances that were very different from the first and second waves (Hainsworth, 2008). This wave has been the most successful for most radical right parties in Europe (Taggart, 2000; Mudde, 2002). What distinguishes the third wave from the previous ones is the simultaneous-emergence of parties of the radical right family in several Western European countries and moreover their effective approach to issues of socio-cultural and socio-political significance (Betz, 1998). As mentioned above, the radical right of the third wave has emerged in a post-communist era. It advocates welfare and

redistributive social policies but defends ethnic-nationalism, which then provides the basis for selective social care policies; promotes demands of direct democratic enrichment of political expression and a wider plebiscitary form of political participation, while preferring authoritarian and hierarchical structures (see Georgiadou, 2008). In short, welfare chauvinism, radical anti-immigration policies, referendum policies and national priority (Hainsworth, 2000) along with the decline of the established socio-cultural and socio-political system and the minimising of the role of the state (Betz, 1994:4) are characteristics of radical right parties in this period. The majority of these radical right parties, according to Betz, (1994) seemed to combine classical liberal approaches to individual rights and the economy, with elements of the socio-political agenda of the radical right, in order to promote and deliver their policies in a more attractive form that would attract more potential voters. Correspondingly, the new radical right parties

[l]eave behind policies and ideologies like the traditional fascism and extremism, as well as their proclivity for violence, for more versatile and issue-oriented political strategies which combine verbal radicalism and symbolic politics through political marketing and branding (Betz, 1998:1)

Their closed structure provides them with the advantage of responding more quickly to the preferences of the electorate (Evans and Ivaldi, 2002). Besides, charismatic leadership, a distinguished characteristic of these parties, plays an essential role in the placement of these parties in the electoral arena. Guided by leaders with fluency in front of the press and the media, the radical right parties are considered 'the most prominent representatives of a new political entrepreneurialism' (Ignazi, 1997; Mudde 2002; Betz 1998; Eatwell 2000). As Mudde (2002) observes, although most of these parties are branded as pariahs, they have managed to launch themselves as significant features in the political field and, additionally, they have developed as a substantial challenge to established political agencies across several western European countries (see also Betz, 1994). In order to better understand their distinctive features, it is necessary to look at issues regarding their definition, their ideology, and the reasons for their electoral success including marketing and branding strategies.

2.4.3. Approaches to radical right ideology: What do they stand for?

Political ideologies can be associated with a variety of social groups, e.g. nations, classes and social movements. Political parties display their ideology, policies and priorities in their own individual way. For this reason, no clarification of the radical right parties can be made *a priori* because, according to Hainsworth (2008), it is essential to identify their discourse, ideas and issues first, in order to be able to categorise them.

[A] political ideology is a relatively coherent set of empirical and normative beliefs and thought, focussing on the problems of human nature, the process of history and socio-political arrangements. (Eatwell and Wright, 1999:17)

Mudde (2005), identifies five elements (nationalism, xenophobia, racism, anti-democratic sentiment and support for a strong state) that appear to be referenced more frequently than other elements in the rhetoric of radical right parties. Additionally, political parties that share these aspects, or some of these, can be placed in the radical right family (see Mudde 2000; Hainsworth, 2008). Other common associations allocated to radical right parties are the acknowledgement of representative democracy, pluralism and ethno-nationalism (Mudde, 2000; Moufahim, 2007). Meanwhile, Ivaldi (2004) describes the identity of the radical right as a ‘heterogeneous political family, [with] a common ideological matrix’ (2004:16); (see also Hainsworth, 2008; Kitschelt and McGann, 1995).

In order to understand the characteristics of the radical right, the focus should be on key elements (‘traits’) of their ideology, following a similar approach to that of Hainsworth (2008): immigration, anti-establishment populism, strong authoritarian security and neoliberal economic approaches

2.4.3.1. Immigration

Hainsworth (1992) defines immigration as ‘the extreme right's issue par excellence’ (1992:7). Immigration ideologies, which incorporate strong sentiments of xenophobia, are among the most characteristic themes of the radical right, with a

distinguishing popular appeal within the electorate. Xenophobia, literally reflecting the fear (phobia) of the foreigner (xenos), is the sentiments in which radical right parties invest, thus grounding their proposals of welfare-chauvinist policies and anti-immigration measures (see Davies and Lynch, 2002 in Moufahim, 2007). As seen above, several scholars have adopted the label of *anti-immigration parties* (see Fennema, 1997) rather than any other definition. This sees radical right parties as ones focused on a 'single issue' (Mitra 1988 in Hainsworth, 2008), emphasising the importance of the issue of immigration³.

Since the majority of immigrants originate from non-Western European countries, as Mudde (2002) notices, they are undertaken as a threat to the cultural identity of the host countries and, therefore, are often accused of exploiting the welfare system, taking the jobs from the native citizens, and being responsible for the increase of crime rates.

[w]hat unites all of these parties is their particular commitment to some sort of ethnic exclusionism - a hostility to foreigners, immigrants, Third World asylum-seekers, and similar outgroups - as well as aggressive nationalism or localism. (Husbands, 1992:268)

Thus, the parties of the radical right project xenophobic sentiments, underline the threat of mass immigration and the potential creation of a multi-cultural society, and propose strict immigration control and asylum policies. In France, since the early 1970s, the *Front National* adopted an anti-immigration rhetoric and called for 'assisted repatriation' (see Front National, 2001; Hainsworth, 2008); comparable examples are found in the Belgian, *Vlaams Blok*, in the Italian *Lega Nord*, in the Swiss *Schweizerische Volkspartei* and in the Austrian *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, among others. Norris (2005) argues that immigration is the 'signature' issue of the radical right, and the fear of the 'other' that drives policies on immigration, asylum seekers and multiculturalism (2005:132). Rejecting any form of multiculturalism is essential within the radical right ideology and is often the reason that radical right parties have been accused of racism. Nation and national identity along with an ethnic and religious homogeneity are seen as things that need to be protected and secured by

³ A detailed analysis on xenophobia and immigration can be found in Betz (1994). *Radical Right Wing Populism in Western Europe* St. Martin's Press. New York. pp. 69-106

any threat e.g. asylum seekers, Muslims, immigrants. In addition, radical right parties 'postulate a homogenous society where national identity is passed on through blood and heredity' (Camus, 2003; Hainsworth, 2000 in Moufahim, 2007:31).

Immigration for radical right parties is strongly related to the concept of the nation. As seen above, the homogeneous entity of the nation is set up to be a priority in the radical right parties' agenda and everything that is international and multinational is being treated as a threat to the 'cultural identity and integrity of the nation' (Moufahim, 2007:31).

[T]he nationalistic myth is characterised by the effort to construct an idea of nation and national belonging by radicalising ethnic, cultural and political criteria of exclusion, and to condense the idea of the nation into an image of extreme collective homogeneity. (Minkenberg, 2002:337)

Another main element of radical right ideology is nationalism. Defending ethno-nationalism the parties of the radical right argue for a homogeneous environment in which the nation is consistent with the state (Eatwell, 2000). Thus, they disregard or belittle any foreign elements that differentiate from it. The nation for radical right parties is perceived as a unit that shares identical cultural and ethnic origins, and individuals that do not share these features should not be considered as part of it (Hainsworth, 2008). In addition, the homogeneity of the nation reflects issues like welfare chauvinism. The socio-economic policy of welfare chauvinism introduces a notion of 'our own people first', an exclusionist approach adopted by the entirety of radical right parties. Based on this principle, the state funds and the offered job placements should be used by natives, rather than immigrants, and along with that the state should protect national economy against the 'foreign competition' (Mudde, 2002:175) For Kitschelt and McGann (1995) what has contributed to the structure of radical right parties' economic rhetoric has been the general anxiety over the growing global competition. Having said that, radical right parties often argue in favour of an economic nationalism, of measurements that will protect the state against its exploitation from the immigrants, while claiming that they can be the ones to protect the wishes and needs of the ordinary voters.

2.4.3.2. Neo-liberal economic approaches

When compared with fascism or post-war extreme right movements, the radical right parties of the third wave, as mentioned above, distinguish themselves due to their free market rhetoric. According to the ‘winning formula’ theorised by Kitschelt and McGann (1995) ‘only if they choose free-market appeals that are combined with authoritarian and ethnocentric and even racist messages will they attract a broad audience’ (1995:vii).

Following a liberal economic approach, as Betz (1998) describes, the purpose is to encourage the development of small and medium-sized companies. Through antagonism within the global market, these enterprises would emerge as key factors that could influence the ‘economic future and development of Western societies’ (Betz 1998:1-2). Having said that, the state should not interfere with the economy but concentrate on supporting a free market. Taking into account these features, the most successful radical right parties argue in favour of policies encouraging lower tax rates and the reduction of government spending (Hainsworth, 2000; Mudde, 2000; Betz, 1998).

In addition, and following the argument emerging from the national-orientation perspective of the parties, a form of ‘solidarism’ is proposed. This argues in favour of a welfare state where where ‘national solidarity replaces class struggle’ (Mudde, 2000:189). Hence, the proposed alternative of the radical right is a complex mixture of neoliberalism and socio-protectionism (see Hainsworth, 2008)

2.4.3.3. Anti-establishment populism

The radical right’s ideology, apart from focusing on the issue of immigration, also argues against the political establishment and the conventional traditional social structures (Hainsworth, 2000). Being often supported by a protest vote (see Eatwell, 1998) these parties build up an argument based on the dissatisfaction created by crucial social issues like unemployment, economic insecurity, immigration policies, along with disappointment and mistrust towards the political parties and the political system (Betz, 1998; Hainsworth, 2008; Eatwell, 1998; Mudde, 2002; Georgiadou

2008) Having said that, the parties are asked to respond to the non-static needs of the electorate and address their dilemmas, wishes and fears regarding several issues such as economy, immigration, and state mistrust. The radical right parties appear to attract voters that feel dissatisfied and 'forgotten' by the political elite, and manage to engage with them by instilling the idea that it is themselves (the radical right parties) that represent ordinary people's needs and deal with their concerns.

2.4.3.4. Strong authoritarian security

Eatwell (2000) underlines two major characteristics of the radical right parties: a) the devaluation of democratic principles (e.g. human liberties and equal rights), promoted by an authoritarian system where rights are classified according to such characteristics as race, nationality and religion; and b) the tolerance of violence as essential in order to accomplish political purposes. Rydgren (2004) highlights that 'authoritarian positions on issue areas such as law and order, citizenship and immigration policy are among the most characteristic features' of the radical right parties (2004:9-10).

According to Mudde (2002), in the ideology of radical right parties there is a general belief that the approach to 'law and order' safeguarded is linked to a well-ordered community by strict penalties for law breaking. Based on the principal idea of a strong state, there should be a strong police force in terms of 'personnel, equipment and competencies' (Mudde, 2002:173) along with a judicial system that would deliver harsher punishments for a variety of crimes. In addition, Mudde (2000) observes, the immigration issue is related to crime and insecurity, within the radical right rhetoric where parties call for a 'zero-tolerance' policy and extreme measures, e.g. expulsion of foreign delinquents (Mudde, 2000 in Moufahim 2007:35).

Nonetheless, Fennema and Van der Brug (2006) describe these parties as a mixture since, according to them, these parties have been motivated directly by fascist rhetoric from the 1930s, whereas others do not sympathise with the fascist element and on the contrary promote policies that encourage the increase of initiatives by the electorate. In addition, some parties talk in favour of a neo-liberalist economic approach, while others reject the free market particularly when it comes to

international levels of trading. The ideology of a party, as examined above, is not the only factor influencing the party's popularity. In the following, section further reasons explaining why the parties of the radical right have made an efficient impression on the electorate are discussed.

2.4.4. Why are they popular?

As already stated above, during the past thirty years radical right parties have emerged in several Western European countries and experienced an increase in their electoral share not only at a national but also at a regional and international level. Golder (2003) argues that the emerging electoral support for radical right parties has often been seen as a compelling influence on government coalitions and policy assessments.

Anastasakis (2000) proposes a model of four approaches to 'the rise, resilience and nature' of the radical right parties: a) historical, as a legacy of the fascist era, b) structural, in terms of a socio-economic context c) political, as political actors, and d) ideologico-cultural, as xenophobic rhetoric. (2000:5-6)

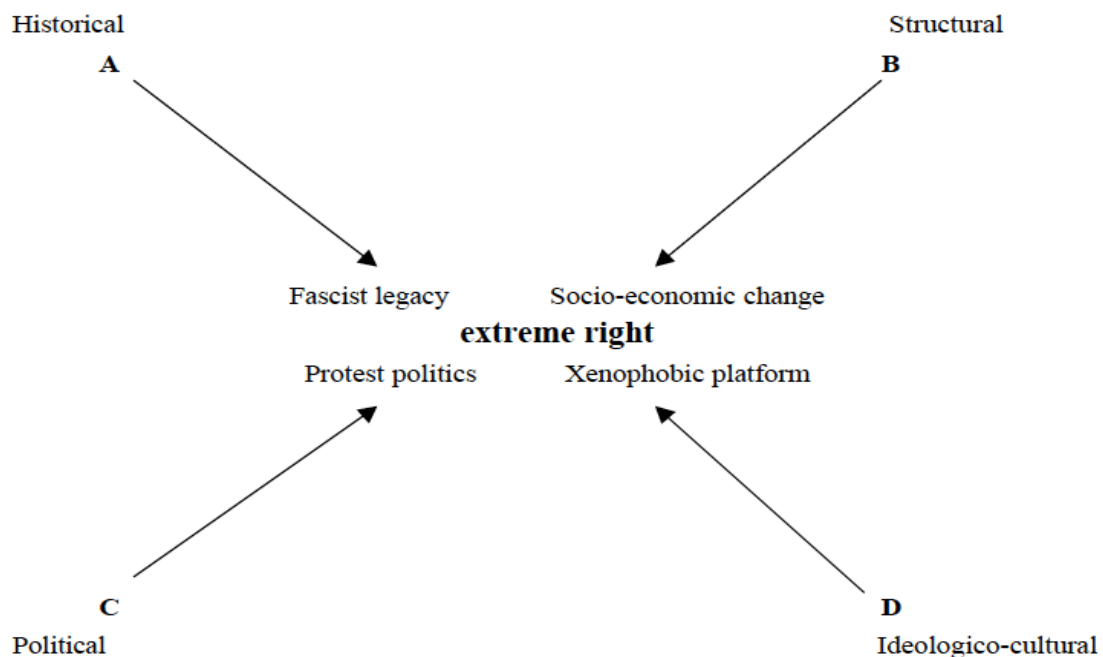


Figure 2.3: Model of defining dimensions of the contemporary European radical right (Anastasakis, 2000:6)

The fascist element can be traced back to the changes, which occurred in the post-war era (Anastasakis, 2000; Hainsworth, 2000; Moufahim, 2007). Additionally, after the economic crisis of the 1970s that created social and economic difficulties followed by the decreasing level of productivity, higher rates in unemployment and a broader gap between rich and poor (Hainsworth, 2000), the radical right parties successfully addressed such distress by focusing on issues related to socio-economic changes, unemployment and immigration of a part of the electorate, which eventually raised their support level. The third feature involves the dimension of a protest vote where the vote can be translated as a protest vote against the political system but nevertheless a vote that additionally has ideological roots (Betz, 1994). Mistrust of established political parties has created a climate of discomfort within a part of the electorate that has chosen 'to turn their back on politics or to use the ballot as a means of protest' (Anastasakis, 2000:14; see also Kitschelt and McGann, 1995 on Scandinavia). Thus voters choose to project their dissatisfaction towards the political established parties by voting for a party that is considered a pariah of the system (Coffe, 2004). Finally, the last dimension concerns the xenophobic approaches of the radical right parties. According to Betz (1994), the radical right parties have exploited the opportunity created by the failure of established political parties to address critical issues, such as immigration; issues considered highly significant by a part of the electorate.

The success of radical parties in Western democracies is not only based on a favourable political environment, but also on leadership, organisational structure and political culture. The charismatic leadership and closed organisational structure of radical right parties has allowed them to rapidly react towards evolving issues (e.g immigration), and take advantage of the 'changing political opportunities' (see Hainsworth, 2000). Additionally, Betz (1998) notices that along with charismatic leadership, party organisation plays an important role as a determinant of success:

[T]he most successful radical right-wing populist parties are led by charismatic figures capable of setting the political and programmatic direction. In addition, most parties display a highly centralised organisational structure, with decisions being made at the top by a relatively circumscribed circle of party activists and transmitted to the bottom. (Betz 1998:4)

This role of an outsider -or a pariah- often attributed to radical right parties not only is due their positions targeting the established political systems but also due to the criticism they receive from the conventional political parties. As Fennema and van der Brug (2006) argue, by denouncing the established political system, the parties of the radical right become more appealing to the electorate who want to punish the mainstream parties with casting a protest vote. Additionally, for Norris (2005) the emergence of the radical right can be examined, based on the perception of a structured political marketplace the wishes of the electorate and the response of the political parties to them play a key role.

2.4.5. Media and the radical right parties: What is missing?

Nevertheless, despite the fact that a large portion of the electorate appears to be neutral and unresponsive to politics, the supporters of radical right parties present a level of loyalty and appear to be willing to continue supporting these parties by offering their votes to them. This attitude enriches the argument of Rensmann (2003), who places the idea of political consumption in perspective by stating that within the a few years' time the radical right parties will have succeeded in transforming new voters to devoted voters. This raises questions about how such parties communicate with voters and the extent to which they use political marketing strategies to increase their support.

There are several conflicting reasons for the success of radical right parties. For Hainsworth (2008) this success reveals a successful 'disillusionment' with the traditional established political elites, in which the radical right parties have managed to effectively offer a political alternative to the electorate. And the key link can be the emerging role of the media over the last several decades.

In the past, political parties manipulated part of the media, including newspapers and journals. In the last few decades, the media have managed to become autonomous from the political parties, and within the years that followed they have increased their influence on the broader audience (Mudde, 2004). Furthermore, recent developments in technology and regulation concerning the media have contributed to the evolution of the means through which the information is being delivered to the audience.

Through media, the shared information can influence the reactions of the audience and form attitudes relating to a variety of issues, politics being one of them.. The political parties acknowledge the recognition of the power that the media possess, and therefore it becomes essential from their perspective to keep the media on their side.

A work that links radical right parties to communication strategies is that of Ellinas. In *The Media and the Far Right in Western Europe: Playing the Nationalist Card*, Ellinas (2010) observes that the media provide the necessary circumstances required in order for the political parties to communicate their political message to broader audiences and therefore ameliorate their position in the electoral market. In addition, exposition to the media, as Norris (2005) highlights, provides the parties of the radical right with a more legitimate profile, offering them the possibility to expand their influence and increase their access to public funding for electoral campaigns.

Although extended works on the radical right parties, their emergence, their ideology and their success have been published since the 1980s (see, *inter alia*, Ignazi, 2003; Betz, 1998; Hainsworth, 2008; Eatwell, 1998; Norris 2005; Kitschelt and McGann, 1995; Mudde, 2005) it has been only within the last few years that scholars have undertaken to work on issues concerning political marketing and communication strategies of parties of the radical right family (Ellinas, 2010; Norris, 2005; Moufahim et al., 2009).

2.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, an overview of the literature on political communication together with that on political marketing, political branding and radical right has been provided. Following the work of such scholars as Betz, Hainsworth and Georgiadou, the chapter has presented an explanation to the basic theories that have been used for the purpose of this project along with the identification of the characteristics of the party family that was selected as a case study.

As mentioned in the introductory chapter of this thesis, the aim is to expand the existing literature on the communication techniques, which radical right parties choose to use, in relation to their primary ideology, and to investigate a connection between

these techniques and their electoral success. The following chapter focuses on the research methods that have been used for this project and a more extensive description of its means and goals, including a discussion of its central hypothesis.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The study adopts a deductive research strategy, developing a hypothesis and testing it against empirical data. According to Braikie's (2000) position on deductive research approach, varying on the purpose, the conclusion to the argument can contain 'a hypothesis, a prediction, or regularity of occurrence that is to be explained' (2000:178). In addition, an in depth analysis of the theoretical framework should precede the collection of the data. In other words, based on the Braikie (2000) approach, in order to fulfill a project of this nature, the data must be 'relevant to the hypothesis and the concepts represented in the hypothesis' (2000:179).

The case study approach, as adapted by Yin (2003), constitutes a 'comprehensive' research approach, which consists of, an 'all-encompassing method, covering the ... design, data collection techniques and specific approaches to data analysis' (2003:24). From the selected case studies, the aim is to recommend a hypothesis on the processes and purposes of marketing tactics of radical right parties. The purpose is to classify common patterns in the communication strategy that the parties use in order to achieve their purposes, notably raising their percentage in national elections or increasing the number of voters who remain loyal. The case study will be used as both a descriptive and explanatory tool.

[t]he distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena' due to the fact that 'the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 2003:2)

In a case study approach, according to Yin (2003), some questions must be posed concerning the actor of the action, the purpose and the way. Having said that, -the hypothesis refers to 'who and what', the purpose is the 'why', and the 'how' is the followed procedure. For Yin (2003) case studies appear to be the favoured approach when 'how' or 'why' questions are presented, when the 'investigator' has little control over proceedings, and when the emphasis is on a 'contemporary phenomenon' within some 'real-life context' (Yin, 2003:5-10). There are also empirical and narrative case

studies, which can also be used. These would depend on the ‘extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioural events’, as well as the degree of ‘focus on contemporary as opposed to historical studies’ (Yin, 2003:3-10). Furthermore, according to Yin (2003), there are several potential sources of evidence for a case study e.g. documents, archives, interviews, and participant-observation (2003:83, 85-96).

Stake (2000) points out that the case study is not a ‘methodological choice’ but, rather, a selection of what is to be examined. The case study can combine several methods (qualitative, quantitative or both) (Hartley, 2004; Yin, 2003). Moreover, the research methods that are used in a case study are not the elements that define it; rather the case study is examined in terms of its ‘theoretical orientation’ and attentiveness in separate cases and can be used with other ‘research strategies to address related research questions in different phases of a research project’ (Hartley, 2004:324; Stake, 2000:435; Kohlbacher, 2006). Hartley (2004) describes case study research as

[A] heterogeneous activity covering a range of research methods and techniques, a range of coverage [from single case study through carefully matched pairs up to multiple cases], varied levels of analysis [individuals, groups, organizations, organizational fields or social policies], and differing lengths and levels of involvement in organizational functioning (2004:332)

Therefore, each case study will create the base for a general model which then will be challenged with another case and, in turn, might propose ways of modifying and enlightening the model to be used (Eckstein 1975; Braikie, 2000; Moses and Knutsen, 2007). This is the intention of the current project. More specifically, each party will be the subject of an individual case, but at the same time all three parties under examination will be used as a multiple-case design. The data analysis is based largely on texts.

3.2. Approaches to the analysis

The style, the structure and the content of political discourse, the rhetorical techniques, the strategies and the motivation of the protagonists are the basic materials of such an analysis. In both cases (content and discourse analysis) the basis is the main

point of reference is the texts – regardless of how generally ‘text’ is defined e.g. texts, media, internet and so on.

Fairclough (2003) proposes that social analysis and research should always take language into consideration since it is a crucial component of social life. Bearing this in mind, this research focuses primarily on the analysis of texts. Textual analysis need not only be regarded as linguistic analysis since texts can also be seen in terms of different discourses and styles which might encompass, for example, images and sound effects. Such a view of language is sometimes defined as the analysis of language 'beyond the sentence'. Hence, texts such as transcripts or manuscripts not only provide further understanding, but they can also alter the way we feel and behave, as well as the values we adhere to (Fairclough, 2003:5-6). Therefore, in order to understand the extent of the influence texts may have on an electorate, a selection of texts used by political parties of the radical right family are examined.

Content analysis began as a technique for the interrogation of political communication but now is applied in almost all the social sciences. Its main advantage is that it does not focus only on the content as it appears, but attempts to investigate underlying messages or subtexts. Therefore, selected texts, such as manifestos will be analysed in terms of content analysis, which is used as ‘a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication’ (Berelson, 1952:18). Accordingly, this particular form of quantitative analysis places the focus on the language that parties stress in their platforms, whereby particularly their ideas and concerns are emphasised (Budge et al, 2001; Klingemann et al, 2006).

Weber (1990), however, proposes that content analysis enables the researcher to make valid and reliable deductions from text, not only about the message itself but also about its addressor and its potential addressees. Other definitions stress content analysis as ‘any research technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics within text’ (Stone et al, 1966:5), or as

[A] research technique for making replicative and valid inferences from data to their context, which involves specialised procedures for processing scientific data and its purpose is to provide knowledge, new insights, a representation of 'facts' and a practical guide to action (Krippendorff, 1980:21)

or even as 'an attempt to characterise the meanings in a given body of discourse in a systematic and quantitative fashion' (Kaplan, 1943:230).

According to Babbie (2001), content analysis can be described as 'the study of recorded human communications' and is 'essentially a coding operation' where coding is defined as 'the process of transforming raw data into a standardised form' (2001:304-309). Similarly, Ryan and Bernard (2000) define content analysis as one of the 'major coding traditions, in which 'coding forces the researcher to make judgments about the meanings of contiguous blocks' and 'coding is the 'heart and soul' of text analysis (2000:780). According to them, classical content analysis 'comprises techniques for reducing texts to a unit-by-variable matrix and analysing that matrix quantitatively to test hypotheses'. However, they also emphasize that such matrix cannot be produced if the set of codes of interest have not been yet obtained and exploited (Ryan and Bernard, 2000:785, Kohlbacher, 2006). Therefore, since this particular form of analysis can effectively be used in order to examine and analyse any form of text or any other forms of recorded communication, such as transcripts of interviews, narratives, TV programmes, newspapers and magazines, content analysis has been commonly applied to various disciplines, from literature through marketing and politics to ethnography.

Content analysis may be used for several reasons, one of which is to identify not only the purpose and the meaning behind the message but also the crucial features of the sender. Thus it enables us to detect the existence of various patterns, such as that characteristics of propaganda. Lasswell (1927) developed a media content analysis which aimed to serve as a 'systematic method to study mass media' and particularly propaganda (Macnamara, 2005:1), in which the principal question was: 'Who says what, to whom, why, to what extent and with what effect?' Additionally, content analysis has been also used as a technique to uncover the centre of an individual or group attention, as well as a tool to describe the trends in the communication content (Berelson, 1952; Weber, 1990).

As Franzosi (2004) points out in the *Handbook of data analysis*, content analysis does not refer to a unique tool of analysis but rather to a wide range of tools and approaches unified by that common goal of quantification, standardisation and systematisation (2004:549) Bryman also emphasises that content analysis is an approach to analyse documents and underlines the role of the ‘investigator’ in the composition of the message: ‘There is an emphasis on allowing categories to emerge out of data and on recognising the significance of understanding the meaning of the context’ (2004:542). This aspect of content analysis is the main reason why it was chosen as a research method for this thesis.

The application of content analysis focuses on three areas: a) description of message property, b) conclusions and assumptions about the sender of the message and why it is sent, and c) conclusions and assumptions about the impact that the message has on its receivers (Tsiras, 2011). Thus, content analysis can be viewed as a research technique, which concentrates on the use of particular vocabulary, ideas, motifs, concepts or role models by media, in an attempt to quantify their use in an objective and reliable method. Furthermore, since such a technique focuses particularly on the use of specific terms or ideas in texts, it also allows carrying out quantitative analysis on large numbers of texts to search for specific words of interest (Carley, 1993:77). Moreover, it is also important to emphasise that texts are not only limited to books, interviews, debates, articles or documents, but rather they concern any form of communicative language, including advertising or transcripts of speeches and conversations. Before going through any content analysis, there are six questions according to Krippendorff that need to be addressed:

[w]hich data are going to be analysed, how are they defined, what is the population from which they are being drawn, what is the context relative to which the data are going to be analysed, what are the boundaries of the analysis and what is the target of the inference 1980:60-63)

Krippendorff also discusses a variety of methods in order to approach and illustrate content analysis, whereby the aforementioned six questions can serve as further guidance for the researcher.

While discussing content analysis of text it is important to emphasise that the text must be coded. Such coding can be done by assigning the text to pre-established categories, which can be formed on the bases of specific topics, forms of expressions, sentence, word or motives. Once the categories are established, analysis can be undertaken on the basis of conceptual analysis or relational analysis. Further explanation of such coding technique is derived from work by Titscher *et al.* 2000, where 'categories are understood as the more or less operational definitions of variables' (Titscher et al., 2000:58).

In conceptual analysis, (or thematic analysis), the analysis contains a procedure of counting individual frequencies of preference based on a word count. As Mctavish and Pirro (1990) point out, the analysis begins with the identification of the research questions and the selection of the data; the next step is the coding of the text into the selected categories along with a constructed dictionary comprising elements which aid in defining the categories. Therefore, the coding technique can be described as a process of selective reduction, whereby assigning the components of text (units of analysis) are assigned to specific categories. This enables the researcher to concentrate on particular themes derived form all used words, which are of significant relevance to the research question.

Carley (1992) proposes a different approach to the conceptual analysis and recommends the use of the method of 'eight steps' in the process of coding texts. Thus, he suggests that the first step should include the decision about the level of the analysis (single word of a group of words) and the character of coded concepts (positive or negative meanings). Additionally, the researcher should determine whether to code for presence of a concept. Furthermore, the researcher must also decide how the distinction between the concepts and their meanings will be classified. Hence, concepts can be coded in the same way as they are presented in the text, or they might be entered as in reference to their original concept despite the various forms they originally appear in. Lastly, a set of rules determining the coding process should be also constructed, as it provides the researcher with a consistent coding method throughout the text. However, before the actual coding begins, the researcher should decide whether irrelevant information should be ignored.

Despite the fact that conceptual analysis is an effective analytical technique, it also suffers from shortcomings due to its quantitative nature. In order to conduct a more effective analysis and explore the relationships that exist between these concepts, relational analysis can be used as an additional tool. While both relational analysis (mapping analysis) and conceptual analysis rely strongly on detecting specific concepts in text materials, the relational analysis extends examination further and also takes into account the analysis of relationships between these concepts. Therefore, it is crucial to indicate the kind of concepts, which will be used for the analysis beforehand, as too many or too few categories may not only skew the data but more importantly may provide unreliable results and lead to invalid conclusions.

Following Carley's approach (1992) again, eight steps can be followed in order to code a text or a set of texts during relational analysis. The whole process starts with the identification of the research question what type or types of relationships are about to be examined. This leads to the actual statistical analysis of the data at the end. Additionally, the results of both statistical and relational analysis are used for interpretation, which will allow to make inferences about the addressor of the messages, their audience and more importantly about the messages themselves. Another use of content analysis is to make numerical comparisons among and within documents, thus such features make content analysis a highly appropriate tool for this research project. Nevertheless, one could argue that such analysis relies mainly on simple word counts. However, Weber (1990) argued that this analytical technique is reliable, but it is also valid, because creating categories and coding data with regard to their meaning enables determining significant implications.

Content analysis is therefore a tool that allows the researcher to determine the central aspect of social interaction since it focuses particularly on communication via texts or transcripts. It is also a research approach that can combine both quantitative and qualitative methods. Cassell and Symon (1994), on trying to describe qualitative analysis, argue that it is characterised by:

[A] focus on interpretation rather than quantification; an emphasis on subjectivity rather than objectivity; flexibility in the process of conducting research; an orientation towards process rather than outcome; a concern with context regarding behaviour and situation as inextricably linked in forming

experience; and finally, an explicit recognition of the impact of the research process on the research situation (1994:7)

This explanation by Cassell and Symon provides an extended description of the main argument of qualitative analysis and at the same time distinguishes it from quantitative analysis by underlining their different perspectives. Following this definition, Neuman (1997) simplifies the differences between the two techniques by pointing out that the qualitative approach requires a selection of data in the form of words, whereas in the quantitative approach the data take the form of numbers.

Going back to content analysis, the approach involves a linguistic issue, which words and in general 'text' are seen as the main point of enquiry analysis. In order to use content analysis in a research project, its goals should be summarised by reducing large amounts of unstructured content, describing the characteristics of the content and identifying aspects of the content in order to support the main argument. In this way, trends and relationships in the text, or set of texts, could become more insightful the intentions and the focus of communication trends could be stressed and additional descriptions of behavioural responses to communications and emotional states of groups and persons could be determined. An important element in content analysis is shaping the categories, in order to analyse the material and come to conclusions. As Berelson (1952) suggests, content analysis becomes accepted or rejected by the categories on which it is based. More specifically, the research is productive when these categories are clearly shaped and tailored to individual problems and content. Krippendorff (1980) summarizes the nature of the content analytic method as a highly systematic set of rules that govern the theoretical background and incremental processes in which the text may be broken down into smaller units of analysis. This aspect explains the gradual study of the data through the use of categories as part of the content analysis.

Nevertheless, it is important that the primary concern of the research should not stray from the content and context of communication (Gerbner *et al.* 1969). This includes who transmits the message, what the issue is and what the cultural and sociological data defining the message are, what the literary-linguistic components are, who the receiver is, and who the target is (Tsiras, 2011). Moreover, it is also important

to emphasize that the fundamental principle in content analysis is that whilst many words are extracted from the text, the actual number of content categories will be much lower. Additionally, Weber (1990) holds that the process of word classification is crucial for analysis, whereby it is important that words in the same category have precisely analogous meaning. On the other hand, from the perspective of qualitative research it is quite common to view content analysis as simple record of word-frequency. Such a belief is based on the notion that the greater word frequency in the text is indicative of its measure of importance (Krippendorff, 1980).

In his sequential model of qualitative content analysis Mayring (2003) offers three different analytical techniques, which can be applied either separately or together, depending on the research question (Titsher et al. 2000:62-64, Kohlbacher, 2006). These are a) summary, b) explication and c) structuring. The first part aims to minimise and organise the material so that it becomes manageable and effective. The second stage involves the procedure of clarification and examination of the material, and finally the structuring refers to the analysis stages used in a content analysis project.

A modified approach to Mayring's is that of Glaser and Laudel:

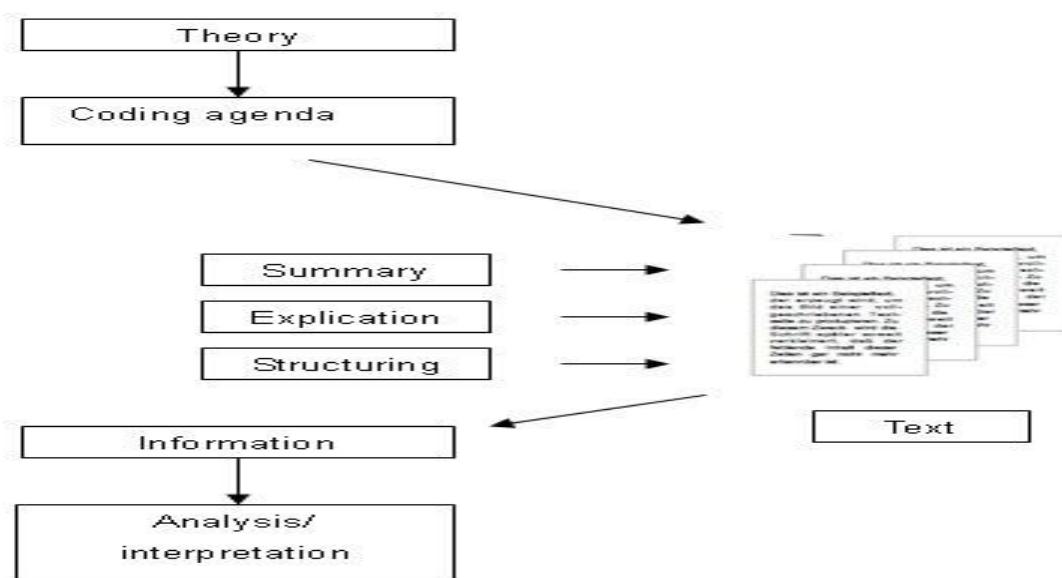


Figure 3.1: Model of basic process of qualitative content analysis (after Glaser and Laudel, 1999:4)

Moreover, one must bear in mind that some words may not only have multiple meanings but also that they might be replaced by synonyms. Thus, Weber (1990) emphasises that such incidents may influence the extent to which a variable is indeed significant. Hence, while analysing word frequencies the researcher must be aware of the aforementioned limitations, since there are no well-developed weighting procedures to date.

Krippendorff (1980), however, suggests that once the inferences about the data are made, several steps must be taken in order to ensure their better understanding. Such steps involve presenting summarised data, testing relational hypotheses and comparison of data obtained from content analysis and other methods, whereby the latter step enables to obtain missing material and increases the validity of the techniques used. These are the three major steps that the current project will follow in order to analyse the data in the best way obtain the expected outcomes, ultimately examining and explaining the communication strategies of the parties.

However, content analysis approach has been criticised by many. Billig's suggestion is the type of approach content analysis offers that refers to counting words but not actually being able to interpret them; a criticism based on the argument that words can only be annotated in the specific context in which they appear (Wilson, 1993). This, however, may be more applicable to a study based on discourse analysis rather than content analysis itself.

Schiffrin uses the term 'text' to differentiate between linguistic material from the environment in which 'sayings' occur and context.

[I]n terms of utterances, then, 'text' is the linguistic content: the stable semantic meanings of words, expressions, and sentences, but not the inferences available to hearers depending upon the contexts in which words, expressions, and sentences are used. [...] Context is thus a world filled with people producing utterances: people who have social, cultural, and personal identities, knowledge, beliefs, goals and needs; those who interact with one another in various socially and culturally defined situations (Schiffrin, 1994:363)

Therefore, while administering discourse analysis researchers should equally emphasise use of language in social, political and cultural contexts as well as that of

the linguistics. Consequently, one must bear in mind that apart from the language itself, also other factors, such as the media, might be involved.

As mentioned previously, 'text' is an interaction between the writer and reader and such interaction can be referred to as discourse. The purpose of this research project is to determine the nature and the characteristics of this relation. Based on the primary data of this project, the next step is to identify the elements that would help in the identification of a pattern of communication techniques used by radical right parties to connect with the electorate and present their ideas in public. However, one must also bear in mind that messages embedded in the text do not have a single meaning, thus their content can be both viewed and interpreted from various perspectives, particularly when the nature of data is ambiguous and symbolic (Krippendorff, 1980).

Using content analysis, this project aims to isolate the messages that parties of the radical right use to communicate with the electorate and to detect the purpose of electoral campaign documents, speeches and official manifestos. The 'product' offered by the party is key to the analysis. This will be undertaken on the basis of the importance given by the party to policy issues, the brands that can be discovered from the primary data used in the research and through the discourse of symbols. As Joppe (2000) emphasises

[t]he extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable (in Golafshani, 2003:598)

Finally, in content analysis, a framing analysis is adopted in order to examine specifically the posters and images of the parties. Framing analysis is a process through which we may observe and analyse the way in which the sender of a message uses an image framework, which is usually emotional in order to lead the receiver to specific conclusions. The idea of framing analysis can be found in Entman's work where he extensively emphasises that to: 'frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation,

and/or treatment recommendation, (1993:52). Such frame analysis is a political communications tool used across a broad set of actions. McCombs, Shaw and Weaver use the term 'second level agenda setting' to describe the inferences that have the public perception of the process in which the media highlight some specific elements of an event (in Tsiras, 2011:267). As Tsiras (2011) underlines, the political communication research in the early 1980s began to engage in the formulation of questions and answers, which affect the respondent's perception of risk.

The issues of reliability and validity are important when conducting content analysis. For Titcher (2000), there are two major issues of content analysis that are discussed in this context - problems of inference and problems of reliability. The problem of inference reflects the potential of making assumptions/implications on a text based on a small sample, which might mislead the results and not produce effective conclusions on the analysis. The second part involves the problem of reliability, which relates to the way the coding has been classified. 'The so-called inter-coder reliability shows to what extent different coders agree in the coding of the same text, and intra-coder reliability explains how stable the coding of one coder is' (Titcher, 2000:66,).

The reliability of a content analytic approach relies on several elements, e.g. stability, reproducibility and accuracy (see Stemler, 2001). Kirk and Miller (1986) classify three types of the 'reliability issue referred to in quantitative research, which relate to the degree in which a measurement, given repeatedly, remains the same, the stability of a measurement over time and the similarity of measurements within a given time period' (in Golafshani, 2003:598). For Weber (1990) attention should be given to reaching conclusions based on the text itself. Additionally, the analysis procedure should be accurate and reliable in terms of being consistent with regard to its coding (different people should be able to code the same text in the same way) (see Stemler, 2001).

Nevertheless, one must also bear in mind that the extent to which the researcher's conclusions can be generalised is highly susceptible to the manner in which categories are established. Additionally, the generalisability also depends on the reliability of the categories used in the research. Therefore, it is crucial to develop the

categories in such a manner that they precisely measure the concepts the researcher actually intends to measure. Constructing rules that permit the initial researcher, as well as others, to categorise and encrypt the same data in a similar way over a period of time, as seen above, is a measure of stability. Stability can also be acknowledged when the same sample of content is being coded repeatedly by the same coder (see Weber, 1990).

Reproducibility, relates to creating a set of categories that helps the analysis become firmer. Having said that, reproducibility indicates the degree in which content categorisation leads to the same or similar conclusions after the text is being processed by several coders (see Weber, 1990). Finally, accuracy discusses the issue of which level the classification of text resembles to a pattern or a type of model, and it is the clearest expression of reliability. Krippendorff (1980) argues that 'it has sometimes been used to test the performance of human coders where a standard coding for some text has already been established' (1980:131).

Validity on the other hand, defines the degree of effectiveness of the study by measuring the original intention and how or in what level the outcome of the results is ingenious. According to Krippendorff (1977), validity 'designates a quality that compels one to accept scientific results as evidence. Its closest scientific relative is objective truth [...] this definition is too broad to be useful and finer differentiations are called for' (Andren, 1981:51). The making of final decisions by the researcher, in terms of what concepts to measure and how to measure them creates the issue of validity or, in other words, '[a]re we really measuring what we want to measure?' (Neuendorf, 2002).

Joppe (2000) underlines that 'validity establishes whether the results obtained meet all of the requirements of the scientific method. While reliability is concerned with the accuracy of the actual measuring instrument or procedure, validity is concerned with the study's success at measuring what the researchers set out to measure' (2000:1). Moreover, Shapiro & Markoff (1997) emphasise that content analysis is only valid and significant to the degree that the outcomes are associated to other procedures, e.g. triangulation (see Stemler, 2001), while Wainer and Braun

(1998) define validity as ‘construct validity [that] determines which data are to be gathered and how they are to be gathered’ (in Golafshani, 2003:599).

There are numerous forms of validity that contribute to the overall validity of a project. The two main features are internal and external validity. Internal validity relies on the level of accuracy of the results of a research, and external validity reflects in the degree in which research outcomes can be tested outside the selected model of a specific research project. In all, validity mirrors the range in which the data of a specific research is credible and dependable. For this reason, extra care should be taken when it comes to testing the level of validity or similarly the degree of the reliability, as both are equally important to proving the effectiveness of a research project (see Carmines and Zeller, 1979). Anastasi (1988) comments on face validity by proposing that

[c]ontent validity should not be confused with face validity. The latter is not validity in the technical sense. It refers not to what the test actually measures, but to what it appears superficially to measure. Face validity pertains to whether the test ‘looks valid’ to the examinees who take it, the administrative personnel who decide on its use, and other technically untrained observers (1988:144)

Triangulation is an approach to developing and evaluating the validity and reliability of research and/or its outcomes. It is used ‘in order to control bias and establish valid propositions because traditional scientific techniques are incompatible with this alternate epistemology’ (Mathison, 1988:13). Patton (2001) states that triangulation can strengthen a study and may combine different kinds of methods or data by merging both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Golafshani, 2003:603). However, Kohlbacher (2006) argues that triangulation can be approached from two different perspectives, when using qualitative content analysis carries out the examination. Thus, triangulation can appear either as ‘integrating different material and evidence often also collected by using various methods’ or ‘applying a method of analysis (qualitative content analysis) that has not been particularly developed for this purpose to a different research design’ (Kohlbacher, 2006)⁴.

⁴ <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/%20view/75/153January%202006>, last accessed January 2014

3.3. Categorising the data – Specifics

Before starting to categorise the data, as in any research project, understanding the question posed at the beginning of the research exercise is the first step. The hypothesis of this thesis is the compass throughout the project and the usage of the data is the means to substantiate the hypothesis and lead the analysis to a conclusion. In this specific case, the target is to identify political marketing and branding techniques by using manifestos and other official party documents as data. The case study combines three different parties, which are all being examined comparatively within the timeframe of a decade 2000-2010.

One of the major difficulties in this project has been the difference in languages. In general, while choosing texts for comparison within the context of a content analysis, the researcher should keep in mind that each language has specific idioms and expressions and styles that could be used in order to describe policies and ideas. Another thing that influences the text is the party itself, and the form of the language it chooses to use. Finally, all these should be combined in a table of categories under the same language, translated accurately in order to be valid as data and as method.

At this point it is necessary to clarify the differences between language between language used in everyday life and the language used by political parties. Since the study examines three different cases, with different contextual backgrounds, great attention has been paid to creating a category basis that would be applicable to all. One of the primary purposes behind the construction of the categories was to test the degree in which the cases under examination manifest characteristics of radical right ideology (see Chapter 2). In order to identify the elements of political marketing and branding, the coding exercise was firstly focused on creating categories based on the official policies expressed by the radical right parties. Ideology is one of the factors for placing a party in a specific political family. Finding evidence of the ideology within the documents is one of the expected outcomes of the research. Within the qualitative framework favoured in this research it is essential to develop the ‘aspects of interpretation’ namely the categories, which need to be as close as possible to the material and to ‘formulate’ them in terms of the material (Kohlbacher, 2006). Having

said that, Mayring's research (2000) suggests that the process of data classification can be explained in terms of following the process set out in Figure 3.2.

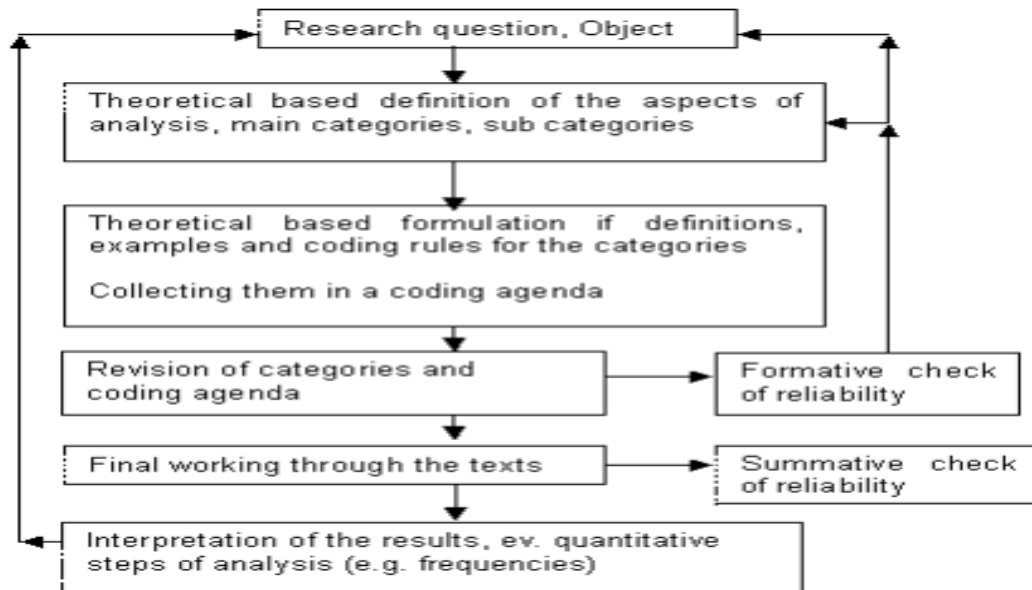


Figure 3.2: Process of deductive category development (after: Mayring, 2000)

Mayring's proposal aims to create an applicable model for text analysis using a category system. For Bryman (2004) qualitative content analysis is based on 'searching out of underlying themes in the materials being analysed' (2004:392). More specifically, Bryman provides a broad description of qualitative content analysis as:

[a]n approach to documents that emphasises the role of the investigator in the construction of the meaning of and in texts. There is an emphasis on allowing categories to emerge out of data and on recognising the significance for understanding the meaning of the context in which an item being analysed (2004:542)

The results that this project will present attempt to show that ideology is used as a form of brand, and that similar patterns of political communication and marketing technique are followed by all three cases in order to project themselves to the electorate. (This will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7).

The categories constructed for this research are based on general themes and reflect a broad spectrum of specific policy issues that the radical right parties include in its programme, e.g. nationalism, immigration, welfare chauvinism. Coding uses not

only single words but also set of words (word strings) of a combination of words and phrases (see Technical Appendix 1). Additionally, in some cases the coding includes positive or negative meanings. The frequency of words, phrases and so on, is also examined.

At this point, the analysis focuses on communication and statements of preference, that is, the particular topics noted by the political parties. By examining the official documents of the parties the other issues mentioned are divided into these major categories: politics and democracy, society and values, religion, economy, education, health, culture, environment, immigration, nation and national identity, law and security development, Europe and the EU, and general international relations. Each party’s text is examined separately. The full set of categories is summarised in Table 3.1

Politics and Democracy	Environment
Society and Values	Immigration
Religion	Nation and National Identity
Economy	Law and Security
Education	Europe and EU
Health	General IR
Culture	Development

Table 3.1: Categories applied to texts to identify key concerns of radical right parties

The purpose here is to create a basis on which further comparative analysis can be made between the parties under examination. Having the Manifesto Project as a guide, changes in policy positions or changes in emphases over time within the parties will be compared (see also Budge et al., 1998). This will facilitate an examination of the similarities and differences in policy positions of the individual parties during the chosen time frame, comparison among the three parties under scrutiny. The basic data

supporting such comparisons are the proportions of election programmes devoted to each category in a set of standardised issue areas. The coding is created, based on what the unit of the analysis seeks to examine. The categories allow for the gathering and creation of the best average illustration of the topics and issues in the selected data. The units of analysis reflect the way the material appears in the texts within their respective context, which is an indispensable part of the interpretation, and analysis that follows. This categorisation has been developed in order to cover the entire content of election programmes and speeches by identifying the statements of preference expressed in them.

3.4. Using CATA

[n]o single software package can be made to perform qualitative data analysis in and of itself. The appropriate use of software depends on appreciation of the kind of data being analysed and of the analytic purpose the researcher wants to obtain on those data (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996:166).

As Rooduijn and Pauwels (2011) underline in their research on measuring radicalism, by using computer-assisted content analysis researchers measuring radicalism rely on a dictionary approach whereby a ‘computer counts the proportion of words that they consider to be indicators’ of radicalism (2011:1275). The selection of words for the dictionary was made on the basis of both empirical and theoretical reasoning by selecting lists of words normally used by such parties over a period of time. The purpose of the dictionary is to simplify the search for analysis units and contain as much information as possible in order to measure the content while calculating the joint frequencies. An English version is provided in the technical appendix at the end of this chapter. Finally, since this research encompasses a comparison between three different cases, from different countries, with different languages, in order for the dictionary to be as accurate as possible, there was no translation of the texts used as data. Each one of them was examined in its original language and format in order to keep the context as specific as possible.

Apart from Rooduijn and Pauwels’ work (2011) which uses computer based content analysis of election manifestos, using other research has been carried out over the past decade or so. A discourse analysis is used by Moufahim (2007) to analyse the

Vlaams *Blok*, where the focus was on the marketing of an extreme right party. Additionally, there is a selection of works by Bara (2001, 2006, 2011, 2013) computerised analysis, several of which have used HAMLET II– at least for part of the analysis. There are numerous computer programmes that offer the opportunity for a content analysis e.g. Concordance, Diction, DIMAP, INTEXT, TEXTPACK, WordStat and so on, but HAMLET II was chosen deliberately for this specific project for, a second reason.

The HAMLET II software was developed by Alan Brier of Southampton University and Bruno Hopp, of the Central Archive for Empirical Social Research in Cologne. Its main purpose is to search a text file for words in a given vocabulary list, and to count joint frequencies within any specified context unit, representing a given span of words. In other words, it counts both individual and joint word frequencies in which the resulting similarities matrix can be analysed using different methods (e.g. cluster analysis, multi-dimensional scaling, Jaccard co-efficiency. The main analytical procedure is used to search for ‘inter-connections between a number of key words that occur in a text and explore word and category associations’ (HAMLET II software manual 2013:4). The programme offers the opportunity to compare lists of words common across several texts. It is also useful in generating lists, including synonyms, for comparing a number of texts, and thus providing a means of viewing, editing and annotating the various files, including graphics.

To sum up, HAMLET II offers a variety of possible tools, individual word frequencies (f_i), joint frequencies analysis (f_{ij}) for pairs of words (i, j), both expressed in terms of the chosen unit of context, while the corresponding standardised joint frequencies $s_{ij} = (f_{ij}) / (f_i + f_j - f_{ij})$ are displayed in a similarities matrix, which can be submitted to a simple cluster analysis and multi-dimensional scaling, if required.

For Tashakkori and Teddie (2010) the use of computer software helps the scholar to ‘subdivide’ the textual material in individual ‘hermeneutic’ units; in these unit words, phrases or expressions are being identified (2010:383). The units of analysis for this project contain words and phrases identified in the text, the established categories. The texts are not divided into smaller divisions but are examined as a whole.

As Bara, Weale and Bicquelet (2007) underline in their work focusing on the analysis of a parliamentary debate on abortion, a ‘semi-automated’ CATA, like the one HAMLET II offers, is an efficient approach to examining and measuring assumptions on, among others, policies and political behaviours (2007:580). The ‘semi-automated’ characterisation refers to the HAMLET II requirement of preparation of a general vocabulary (see Technical Appendix) of key words and terminology according to which the analysis will be conducted.

HAMLET II allows the researcher to explore text, which in this specific case comprise texts manifestos and presidential speeches, on the basis of the established vocabulary. The procedure of the construction of the vocabulary entails several stages. The first step is a comprehensive empirical qualitative analysis of the manifestos and presidential speeches. The context of the data is the key point for the next steps of the analysis: the categories and the vocabulary. Following the flow of the text, the next step is to highlight the focus of the party in order to create the categories. A need for a common pattern between all the three cases of this thesis has been deemed crucial in terms of adding validity to the results of the forthcoming analysis. After the finalisation of the categories, established on the basis of party policies offered (see Chapter 7), the construction of the vocabulary is the final step before the analysis. Since the documents are examined in their original language, the specific features of each language and their implications had to be considered in order to build a common applicable pattern. This is similar to the procedure of establishing the categories. The vocabulary is meant to be designed in a way that facilitates the examination and identification of the areas covered by the categories.

Keeping that in mind, three different vocabularies are created in the original language of the documents derived from the three respective countries involved in the case studies of this thesis. The idea is to keep the same vocabulary structure, adding specific words or phrases that are applicable to each individual case based on the language element, e.g. the word for ‘parliament’, which is different in all three cases. Additionally, during the procedure of building the vocabulary the definition of meanings had to be examined in those cases, where the outcome could be misleading. One of the advantages of the software, and a main reason for which HAMLET II has been chosen for this project is its capacity to examine the documents in their original

language without the necessity of translation, since that would impose limitations on the conceptualisation of the data.

Having established the categories and the vocabulary, the next step is the analysis itself. The presentation of the data, in terms of measuring their salience in the documents (see Chapter 7), is in percentage form. It should be underlined that in the texts, a large amount of words included appear to be largely meaningless, something that explains low levels of percentage in the final results (see also Bara, Weale and Bicquelet 2007). Again, what is important at this point is to try and focus on the useful information, which is clarified through the categories within the vocabulary. This can also be explained based on the rhetoric characteristic of the manifestos and presidential speeches themselves. After all, the purpose of the current project is to identify the original message of the parties under examination, in order to build an argument about their communication strategies, while discarding any unnecessary information. The specific presentation of the data has been selected because it gives a general idea about the extent of the specific categories in the selected documents while at the same time, it offers an efficient comparison between the chosen cases.

Along with HAMLET II, another software programme Nvivo, has been used. According to Bazeley (2007), Nvivo follows five principles according to which an analysis can be conducted: a) managing the data by organising them, b) managing ideas in order to comprehend the 'conceptual and theoretical issues' encountered during the research project c) query data by 'posing several questions of the data', and operating the software to answer these queries d) modelling visually by producing diagrams and e) reporting by exploiting the data gathered (2007:2-3). As Bazeley (2007) underlines, using a computer essentially guarantees that the user operates in a more methodical, thorough, and assiduous way. NVivo is a Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) computer software package, offering a reduction of manual tasks. Adopting a facilitated approach analysis of qualitative data has enhanced reliability.

Finally R language is used for purposes of presenting data and analysis. R language provides a wide diversity of statistical elements e.g. statistical tests, classification, clustering and graphical methods (see www.r-project.org, 2013). In this

thesis, R is used to help in creating graphical representation of the results of the content analysis (see Chapter 7).

3.5. Why take a comparative approach?

Comparisons between different countries, institutions or agents enable us to analyse similarities and differences, and thereby make claims or test hypotheses. This facilitates greater understanding of the individual cases in different contexts. For Lijphart (1975) comparative analysis is the

[m]ethod of testing hypothesised empirical relationships among variables on the basis of the same logic that guides the statistical method, but in which the cases are selected in such a way as to maximise the variance of the independent variables and to minimise the variance of the control variables (quoted in Moses and Knutsen 2007:95)

There are different ways in which comparative analysis can be applied to the examination of case studies. Through a comparative perspective the same methods of analysis and the same concepts can be applied to different country-based cases. A major issue for comparative analysis is that in every case that is used in the comparison, the same framework should be followed as closely as possible. This can be achieved by using appropriate indicators, measurements and interpretations. In comparative research several disciplines can be combined, since there is no methodology ‘peculiar’ to comparative research (Heidenheimer, 1983). Content analysis, thus, represents a useful comparative tool in this regard.

The three parties chosen as the cases in this research are drawn from the party systems of Greece, Switzerland and Italy. The similarities in the parties’ emergence during the period of 2000-2010, and the common elements that place them in the radical right family, are the main criteria that have contributed to this choice. The parties that have been selected as cases for study are the Greek *Laikós Orthódoxos Synagermós* (LA.O.S.), Switzerland’s *Schweizerische Volkspartei* (SVP) and the Italian *Alleanza Nazionale* (AN). Although SVP and AN have a longer history than LA.O.S., the research focuses just on the first decade of the twenty-first century, a common period when all three parties experienced growing levels of political support.

Specific policies, as outlined in Chapter 2 have been selected as a major focus in terms of identifying the ‘radical rightness’ of the parties.

The nature of policies is very similar in the manifestos of all three parties. They all make xenophobic appeals, calling for the expulsion of illegal immigrants and demanding stricter measures to reduce immigration. For them, immigration is a threat to several major aspects of national life, such as national security, unemployment and crime. At the same time, all three are self-characterised as nationalist, with nationalism itself being an issue well used during their national campaigns. Furthermore, anticommunism and anti-Semitism are part of the parties’ ideology. One other important factor that represents a link between these cases is charismatic leadership and its role in the organisation of the party itself. All three party leaders, Karatzafieris, Blocher and Fini ,are strong personalities who guide the parties in their every move and have created a functional organisational system around them. At the same time, all three parties have great access to the media where they can propose their ideas to the voters and attract their attention.

Despite the similarities between the parties, there are also certain major structural and cultural differences, e.g. difference in political systems, which is a particular aspect in the Swiss case. Furthermore, in the Swiss and Italian cases, the chosen parties have participated in government coalitions, a factor that is not relevant to the Greek case in the chosen time frame (LA.O.S. participated in a coalition government formed in 2011). Another important issue is the link between fascism and post-fascism in the Italian and the Greek case, while this is not relevant in the Swiss case. Finally, both the Italian and Greek parties are close to the Church, something that distinguishes them from SVP.

As mentioned above, the period of 2000-2010 saw all three parties appearing to experience electoral success at a national level and represent themselves in the ir countries’ parliaments. Additionally, despite the fact that the Swiss and Italian parties have been more active in their countries’ political scene in the years before the selected period, Blocher’s contribution after 1999 (Chapter 5) in the case of SVP, and the turning point of 1995 (Chapter 6) in the case of AN, suggest that, 2000 can be

legitimately considered a significant point of reference that marks the beginning of a time frame for the comparative examination of all three parties.

Moreover, as seen above (Chapter 2), it is often the case that the parties examined under the label of the Radical Right family have numerous differences between them, which creates difficulty when making a comparative analysis between them. Nevertheless, as underlined in the previous chapter (Chapter 2), all three parties are considered members of the Radical Right family, validating the comparative aspect of this project. Finally, the current project recognises and acknowledges the differences of the parties, which are presented in extended detail in the following chapters (4, 5 and 6).

In comparative research the cases may be similar in some regard, but may differ in some other. This is exactly what the evidence shows in this project, and these differences are treated as an additional point for examination. The goal is to discover where the cases are different, but also where these cases find a common ground. Having said that, emphasis is placed on the aspects, properties and attributes that characterise the case studies.

3.6. Conclusion

It is important to understand that this research does not plan to ignore the differences between the parties but to engage them in the general analysis which, despite those differences, demonstrates that LA.O.S., SVP and AN are valuable cases for this research project, because of their placement within their national political arenas and their development as successful representatives of the radical right family. Furthermore, it is very important to understand how the parties function within the political scene, and to become familiar with their identity. The following Chapters (4, 5 and 6) present an in depth qualitative analysis of texts produced by each party.

3.7. Technical Appendix

Politics and Democracy

administration

administrator

Advisory

affairs of state

anti-fascism

backroom

bipartisanship

bureaucracy

cabinet

campaigning

citizen

citizenry

civics

confederation

congressional

constitution

constitutions

control

cybernetics

democracy

democratically

deputy

devolution

domestic affairs

elect

elected

election

electioneering

fascism

federal
foreign affairs
governance
government
government policy
hegemony of the parties
hustle
internal affairs
legislature
Legislature
matters of state
Ministerial
Ministry
Municipal
municipalities
Nepotism
Neutrality
Parliamentary
Parties
Party
Policies
Policy
political changeover
political practice
political science
Politics
Polity
Polity
Power
Predominance
premier
presidency

presidentialism
presidents
referendum
regency
regime
regimental
regimental
regimentation
representativeness
royalties
sovereignty
State
statecraft
statecraft
stateship
subsidiarity
the feds
the Right
undemocratic
vote

Society and Values

babies

baby

carrier

child

Childhood

children

class

communities

community

companionship

dignity

elderly

equality

families

family

fellowship

free

freedom

groups

harmonisation

high society

independence

independent

inequality

liberty

men

mother

mothers

older

operators

popular sovereignty

population

sector
Seniors
sex
single people
social
social class
social club
social culture
social group
social organisation
social organisation
social system
socials
society
socio-economic class
stratum
welfare
wellbeing
women
young

Religion

believers
catechism
Catholicism
cemeteries
chaplain
Christ
Christian
Christian values
christianity
Church

faith
fundamental
God
intellectual
Lord
multi-religious
Orthodox
orthodoxy
prayer
priest
religion
religions
religiosity
religious
religious belief
ritual
spiritual

Economy

account
austerity
balance sheet
bank
bedt
benefit
budget
costs
credit
crisis
curator
currencies
currency

debt
deposit
earning
earnings
economic
economic crisis
economy
economy
euro
euro
excesses
expenditure
expense
expenses
fee
financial
franc
GDP
gold
income
inflation
interest rate
its tax
loan
market
money
multinational
national tax
partnership
pension
poverty
poverty
price

privacy
profit
property
proprietorships
prosperity
rates
reduction
rentier
retired
retirement
revenue
salary
savings
stock
stock exchange
tax
tax cuts
Tax Department
tax evasion
tax evasions
tax office
tax sovereignty
taxation
taxman
taxman
taxpayer
trade
trade union
trade unionists
value
VAT
wages
wealth

wealth

work/employment

Education

coaching

college

culture

educate

education

education

educational

educational

educationals

elementary school

students

elementary school

teacher

high-school

learning

pedagogical

pedagogy

private school

public school

qualification

scholarship

scholarship

school

schooling

science

student/students

study

teacher

teachers

teaching
training
tuition
tutor
tutoring
university

Health

diagnostic
disease
doctor
drugs
ehphoria
health
health insurance
healthcare
healthfulness
healthiness
hospital doctors
hospital network
hospitalised
illness
injured
insurance
medicine
mental
nurses
parmaceutical
patient
pharmaceutical
industry
pharmacy
physical

sickness
well-being

Culture

archives
conservation
cultural
cultural assets
culture
heritage
historical
history
journalism
journalist
library/libraries
literary heritage
media
museum
newspaper
radio-TV broadcasting
system
reporter
television

Environment

biomass
electricity
emissions
energy
environmentalist
environment
environmental politics
geothermal

hydroelectirc
hydrogeological
natural
nuclear
park
pollution
rubbish
solar
sustainable
development
water

Nation and National Identity

autonomy
bortherhood
devolution
nation
national
national unity
nationalism
nationality
patriot
patriotic

Immigration

adoptive citizen
alien
alien absconders
alien residents
amnesty
asylum applicants
asylum seekers
border crossers

border jumpers
borders
day-laborers
deportation
deportations
documented alien
entrants
foreign nationals
foreign students
foreign-born
foreign-born inmate
foreign-born newcomers
foreign-born workers
foreigner
guest workers
identification papers
illegal
illegal border-crossers
illegal entrants
illegal immigragion
illegal immigrants
illegal newcomers
illegal residents
illegal workers
immigrant
immigration
incomer
lower-wage illegal
workers
migrant
migrant workers
minaret
naturalised citizen

newcomer
out-of-status migrant
outsider
paperless immigrant
pioneer
refugee
seeker
settler/colonist
UDA (Undocumented
Alien)
unauthorized workers
uncontrolled
immigration
under-banked
under-served population
undocumented
undocumented citizens
undocumented
foreigners
undocumented
immigrants
undocumented janitors
undocumented persons
undocumented workers
visa overstayers

Law and Security

abolition
abuse
abusement
armed
armies
army

authority
court
crime
criminal
criminals
defence strategy
defense
defense policy
discrimination
guilty
lawbreaker
lawbreakers
military
offence
penal
penalty
perpetrator
police
pornographic
prostitution
rural police
safety
security
security forces
security union
sex crimes
squadron
terrorism
violence
war

Development

agriculture
building areas
business
company
corporation
development
enterprise
farm
farmers
fishing
industry
livestock
navigation
peddlers
ports
production
sailor
shipbuilding
shipping
smuggling
tourism
traffic
transport
unemployment
union
work

Europe and EU

EU
Europe
European Union
Europeanism

Maastricht
agreement

General IR

Africa
centralisation
diplomat
Far East
foreign policy
globalisation
internationalisation
Latin America
Mediterranean area
Middle East
NATO
NATO
Russia
Schengen
UN
USA

4. The Case of *Laikós Orthódoxos Synagermós* (LA.O.S.)

4.1. Introduction

The first case is that of *Laikós Orthódoxos Synagermós* (LA.O.S.), a radical right party formed in 2000 by a journalist and former member of the conservative party of Greece, *Nea Demokratia* (ND)⁵. LA.O.S. is a political party that has been identified as a radical right party, as it complies with Taggart's thesis about radical right parties adopting anti-establishment rhetoric and claiming that they expresses 'mainstream' voters' views. Despite this it has a closed structure, is characterised by a strong leadership and attracts younger voters who have become disillusioned with a wide spectrum of political ideologies (see Ignazi, 2003). The rhetoric of LA.O.S. includes elements of national populism and, after 2005, strong anti-immigration strategies. It is often compared to the French *Front National* or the *Alleanza Nazionale* in Italy (see Tsiras, 2011; Georgiadou, 2008; Ellinas, 2010), so LA.O.S can be regarded as the Greek representative of the third wave of the radical right.

4.2. Background – Foundation and Electoral success

According to his personal website Karatzaferis, the founder and current leader of LA.O.S., essentially began his involvement with politics in 1980, when ND asked him to be a columnist on the party's newspaper *Nea Poreia* (New Directions) (Karatzaferis, 2012). In 1990 he created the radio station Radio City and TV Telecity, renamed as Teleasty⁶. Karatzaferis was nominated as a candidate for ND in the national elections of 1993, 1996 and 2000 and was elected in all three (Karatzaferis, 2012). In 2000, when ND lost the national elections, he was banned from ND, and a few months after his dismissal he announced the establishment of a new party (LA.O.S.). The exact date was September 14, 2000 – the day commemorating for Greek Orthodox people the lifting of the Holy Cross, which highlights potent religious symbolism. (Tsiras, 2011). Before and after ND's electoral defeat in the 2000

⁵ *Nea Demokratia* (New Democracy, ND) is the main centre-right political party and one of the two major parties in Greece. It was founded in 1974 by Konstantinos Karamanlis

⁶ This change of name indicates the increasing attention paid to 'Hellenic values' by LA.O.S., expressed through the use of 'pure' Greek language, which excludes the use of foreign terms; a linguistic equivalent to their nationalist and anti-immigration policies.

elections, Karamanlis, the then leader of ND, sought to adopt a more centrist orientation (Vernadakis 2005), and as a direct consequence Karatzaferis was expelled (Tsiras, 2011; Ios, 2012).

LA.O.S. from its foundation until 2010 has participated in six elections: the municipal and prefectural elections of 2002, the national and European elections of 2004, the municipal and prefectural elections of 2006, the snap national elections of 2007, and the national and European elections in 2009. Through these electoral processes has gradually developed its political activity, aiming to emerge from the side-lines. The following section is based on the official records of the Ministry of Interior Affairs, which can be found through its official website.

The electoral debut of LA.O.S. took place on 13 October 2002. The chairman of the party Karatzaferis was the only candidate of the party in the prefectural election in Athens-Piraeus and he managed to acquire 13.6% of the vote. The performance of LA.O.S. in ensuing elections was even better. In March's 2004 national election the party was not able to surpass the threshold of 3% (managing 2.19% with 162,103 votes), but the performance was very promising and well above the predictions of exit polls and election surveys. In the European Parliament elections that followed, LA.O.S. did even better and managed to elect its president Karatzaferis as a representative in the European Parliament. It should be noted that 2004 marked a turning point for the emergence of the party. Although unable to gain the necessary percentage in order to enter parliament in the elections of March, LA.O.S. managed to elect Karatzaferis as a MEP. In the prefectural elections of October 2006, LA.O.S. participated in sixteen prefectures and in one municipality in Thessaloniki, with Karatzaferis as a candidate. The statement of Karatzaferis, immediately after the elections on October 16th, is very enlightening in terms of how the party perceived the election

result:

[w]e achieved our one, clear strategic objective. In previous elections we declared our rejection of the established political system. Remember that we were accused of extremism, concerning our views on the functioning of democracy in this country. So we managed through a strategy (indeed a very efficient one that we built with my colleagues at LA.O.S.) to go into these elections without any direct or indirect reference to these issues, which dominated the previous elections. [...] It does not change what we serve! We changed the way we serve it (Karatzaferis, 2006)

LA.O.S., in the minds of the electorate, is placed at the radical right point of the left-right scale. It notes the highest voting intention in rightmost points of the far right in the political spectrum, while the majority of its voters originate from the ND party. In the years from 2004, LA.O.S extended its electoral appeal and achieved its highest levels of electoral success. This increase, however, did not occur unilaterally (see Tsiras, 2011; Psarras, 2010; Kolovos 2005).

As Psarras (2010) notes, many potential voters of LA.O.S. place themselves on the right of the political spectrum. They tend to be socially conservative and inward looking, and reflect an aversion towards modernism and the avant-garde. They are also distributed across the political spectrum, and belong to dynamically growing segments of Greek society, such as the young and mid-upper social strata. As Vernadakis (2005) notices, experts understand the major distinct expression of this trait as the difference between the placement of LA.O.S. in the left-right scale and the corresponding self placement on the same scale by its potential voters. According to Vernadakis (2005), voters most likely to vote for LA.O.S. are centre-right and define themselves as more leftist than the average voter of ND. LA.O.S. is also socially conservative and introspective, but not much more than other constituencies and social groups.

Seven years after its foundation, LA.O.S. passed the threshold for election to the national parliament by receiving 3.8% of the votes and electing 10 members in the parliament. In the European parliament elections of 2009 the party managed to gain 7.15% of the total votes and elected 2 members. The result of the election of 2009 for the LA.OS was 386,152 votes and 5.63%.

Figure 4.1 that follows represents the electoral presence of LA.O.S. since 2004, a that changed the level of the presence of the party in the national and international political scenes. From 2004-2009 the party experienced a remarkable surge and established its place as one of the most influential parties in Greece.

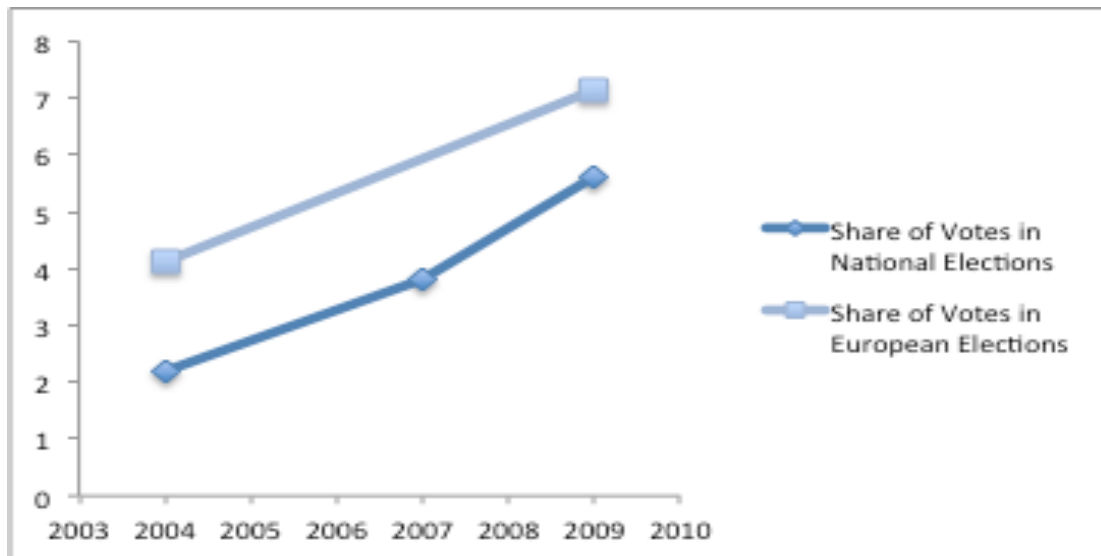


Figure 4.1: Election Results since 2004 (LA.O.S.)

Additionally, in the national elections of 2007 the party had its breakthrough by reaching 3.8% of the vote and electing 10 members of parliament. In 2009 the party gained 5.63% of the vote and elected fifteen members of parliament. As Ellinas underlines in *The Media and the Far Right in Western Europe: Playing the Nationalist Card* (2010), the number of seats won by LA.O.S. in 2009 was partly because of the changes to the Greek electoral system, which reduced disproportionality and favoured smaller parties.

As mentioned above (see Chapter 2), before trying to identify a common model of communication used by the parties under examination, it is necessary to identify each party's characteristics and ideology as well as its aims and purposes. In order to achieve this, official documents of the parties are examined which in the case of LA.O.S. are the manifestos of 2004 and 2007. These documents provide an opportunity to understand the parties' identity through the spectrum of their rhetoric, and thus provide more detailed evidence on their communication tactics.

4.3. How does the party identify itself?

Following the conceptualisation presented on the existing literature (see Chapter 2), political communication focuses on the ways, that political parties choose to express themselves, in terms of their intention to attract the attention of the electorate.

A key point in the strategic use of communication is the way a political party identifies itself in public. In the case of LA.O.S. ,just before the election of 2004, the party announced its official ‘ideological platform’, along with a national electoral programme (LA.O.S., 2004), something that was retained in literally identical form in the manifesto of 2007 (LA.O.S., 2007). This introduces LA.O.S. as

[...] a fully democratic party, where priority is to ensure national sovereignty as guaranteed by Article 1 of the Constitution; a party which advocates equity, collaborates along with the operating institutions and with elected officers ,and addresses conscious citizens that do not tolerate deception or leave others to take decisions in their name (LA.O.S., 2004)

The foundation of the party is identified in this document as meeting an historical need to address the–nation’s requirements. The ‘self-identification’ of the party emphasises that it is, above all else, a *Greek* party. Hence, it focuses on the long-term interests of the country and the Greek people; similarly its policies are inspired by the so-called Greek spirit, Greek values and Greek culture. The main priority of the new party was the restoration of the sovereignty of the people and the overthrow of the ‘rotten’ status quo that is seen as oppressing the country and leading to the gradual ‘de-Hellenisation and enslavement of the nation’ (LA.O.S., 2004). Its main purpose is to gain ‘power through democratic and legal means’ (LA.O.S. 2004 article 2). From the beginning, LA.O.S. wanted to make clear its democratic identity in order to distinguish itself from other existing extreme right movements which express anti-state ideas and give emphasis to the greatness of the nation and Greek identity.

In this document, the party continues by underlining that it is a ‘popular party, without being populist’, putting the interests and protection of under-privileged Greeks above all and supporting both individual liberties and the right to security, progress and well-being for all people living legally in Greece without discrimination (LA.O.S., 2004). Still LA.O.S. wants to support the importance of the people and their respect and recognition of their liberties and rights, but at the same time, points to the issue of illegal immigration, which is a clear indication of its ideology. Similarly, it rejects the label of ‘radical right’, even though it accepts that ‘we should bear in mind the collapse of communist ideology and the serious social and economic problems faced by all countries that were imposed such a regime’ (LA.O.S., 2007). This is an

approach taken by similar parties in other European democracies, such as the *Front National* in France, or the *Fremskrittspartiet* in Norway, among others.

Meanwhile, it states that ‘it is an anthropocentric party, which encourages hard work, ingenuity, the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of Greek citizens, while supporting the rights of vulnerable economic classes and the safeguarding of workers’. The citizen is at the centre of attention, where motivation is rewarded, but at the same time the intention of attracting voters is clear. By targeting the vulnerable economic classes LA.O.S. openly targets a part of the electorate that is most exposed to economic crises and most influenced by political and economic decisions. Additionally, it sees itself as ‘a modern party, in real sense of the word, condemning all phenomena that characterise bankrupt societies, such as corruption, cronyism and nepotism, unemployment and informal economy, insecurity and crime, etc.’ (LA.O.S., 2004). Again, by opposing the established parties and the policies of the last few years that caused the country such significant problems as unemployment, insecurity and crime, LA.O.S. wants to distance itself from the mainstream political parties and underline its differences from them by promoting a caring and determined profile in order to work in the name of the country and for its benefit.

The first impression from this ‘ideological platform’ of LA.O.S. is that it highlights the identity that the party wants to claim for itself in the eyes of the electorate, which plays a major role in the broader communication strategy of the party. The emphasis on the national element, anti-establishment sentiment, democratic identity and the party’s populist appeal, are key aspects of the political identity and the rhetoric that the party adopts. These are elements that can be traced throughout the party’s effort to succeed.

In the manifesto of 2007, after identifying its characteristics, the party clarifies what it does *not* stand for. According to this statement LA.O.S. is not a dogmatic anti-American party, but, does not accept that Greece should be guided by U.S. foreign policy and that it should react when U.S. policies threatens the interests of Greece. Having said that, it continues by underlining that it is not a dogmatic anti-European party, but it rejects the idea that ‘powers that cancel our national sovereignty should be offered to the European Union’ (LA.O.S., 2007). The vision of the party is to create a

secure environment for Greek citizens and their children in a different and improved country that represents the 'spiritual, economic, social and political forefront of Europe and the world' (LA.O.S., 2007). This vision continues with a definition of the values it stands for, e.g. human dignity. LA.O.S. argues in favour of a state free of partisan influences and economic dependency in a country where the political leadership will serve the interests of the people and will promote the country's political, economic, social and cultural interests. In saying so, LA.O.S. is considered to be using radical populist rhetoric, making direct appeals to the 'common man' and distancing itself from the political establishment (Ellinas, 2010).

According to LA.O.S., Greece should be an independent and strong nation that will not risk its territorial integrity. Believing in a Greece characterised by social justice and clear rules in all aspects of economic and social life, the party underlines the need for substantial support for expectant mothers, children and the elderly, and the need for protection of all structures necessary to ensure that there will be 'Greeks in the future' (LA.O.S., 2007). It continues by denying that it is a nationalist party, yet at the same time it asserts that it should not be acceptable to devalue the fundamental contribution made by 'the Greek spirit' to global culture. The supremacy of Greece and its culture, and contribution to the world is something that is commonly mentioned throughout LA.O.S.'s official documents but also by its members and its leader. For them, Greece is the centre of the civilisation of the western world and a model of democracy and culture that should have the required respect from other countries and cultures.

Finally, it emphasises that it is not a racist party, even though it proposes that it 'would be easy to underestimate the problems created in our country as a result of uncontrolled immigration' and similarly denies being a religious fundamentalist party, it regardless of the fact that it states that 'you should not overlook what the Constitution provides us, the Eastern Orthodox Church of Christ as the prevailing religion of Greece' (LA.O.S., 2007). This section represents a denunciation of the criticism that LA.O.S. receives from within its own party members regarding its stance on several major issues concerning nationalism, racism and fundamentalism in terms of religion. Again, it tries to draw attention to the prevailing religion of the Eastern

Orthodox Church of Christ, and the problems that could be caused by illegal immigration, rather than spelling out a clear anti-immigration stance.

In short, the general goals of the party, as stated officially, might be summarised as: achieving a democratic and meritocratic organisation and functioning for the party, resolving the problems of ordinary people; consolidating and securing the patriotic and religious sentiment of the people; demonstrating a sense of civic responsibility; formulating policies only on the basis of evidence; being direct and interactive in communicating with and providing information for the people, regardless of their social and economic status; defending each wrongly accused Greek citizen, and finally providing radical solutions to the ever lasting concerns of Greek citizens. It is important to understand that the main concern of the manifesto is not what the party represents, but what the party wants people to believe it rejects. As pointed out in the introduction to the manifesto of 2007, LA.O.S. is the latest parliamentary party undergoing a process of defining its identity (LA.O.S., 2007). ‘But what we are; what we want; what we believe; and most importantly! And most importantly, ‘what we are and what they repel!’ (LA.O.S., 2007). This statement, according to Psarras (2010) is a clear example of the strategy that the party chooses to follow, which he terms as ‘politics of the Trojan horse’ (see Psarras, 2010:136-172). This evaluation by Psarras contributes to the general understanding of the communication tactics of LA.O.S. Referring back to McNair’s (1995) argument on political communication (see Chapter 2), these first parts of the manifestos underline the aspects that develop the party’s political identity.

4.4. Structure and Ideology

4.4.1. Structure

In order to understand how the party works, it is useful to examine briefly the structure of the party. As mentioned earlier, the perspective of LA.O.S. is that the party represents a ‘vision’ that had become, a reality incorporated by its leader and founder Karatzaferis. The presence and the influence of the president is clear and determined in every step and every decision-making procedure.

The structure of the party is extremely complex, but in the majority of cases the subordinate organs are under the direct control of the president; in other words, it is based on the centrality of the leader. A representative example is the political council, which is not only appointed by the president but has a variable number of members. Specifically, according to article 20:

[g]iven that members of the political directors are appointed by the president of the party, their number is defined and varies with the need to fix the political arena (LA.O.S., 2004)

As Psarras (2010) underlines, it is an absolute bureaucratic regime of which the only source of power is the president. Also, the party structure is based on an indefinite arrangement which may be given a different shape in accordance with the president's will at any given time. In practice, the party is under the firm control of Karatzaferis, who rarely convenes the Executive Office and who runs it with the help of close associates and employees from Teleasty (Ellinas, 2010).

4.4.2. Ideology and policy-making

Since its foundation LA.O.S. has been characterised by many scholars as a party of the radical right family (see Georgiadou, 2008; Kolovos, 2005; Tsiras, 2011; Psarras, 2010). Nevertheless, Karatzaferis strongly rejects the term radical right as a description of the party, a reaction common in many parties of this party family, e.g. Le Pen, who pressed lawsuits against journalists and fellow politicians that were using the term (see Tsiras, 2011; Ios, 2012). Having said that, the main concern for parties, such as LA.O.S., is how to change their public perception as a pariah and establish their position, as patriotic movements in their national political systems.

The idea of how the political parties under examination structure their political rhetoric is one of the main motivations of this project. It demonstrates how the manifestos contribute to the identification of aspects of ideology and the policy-making process and that they are the main means for political parties to promote their intentions and underlining motives. Before conducting the content analysis (see Chapter 7), it is important to understand the core ideology of the parties and their

proposed policies, which reflect the relationship between their political communication and their political agenda.

Nationalism

Concerning its ideology LA.O.S. could be characterized as a mixture of ethnic and state nationalism. According to the official statement in the party's manifesto, it stresses that the party aims to serve 'the Nation, the Virgin Mary, the Faith, the History and the Greek cultural identity' (LA.O.S., 2004). It underlines that the party is at the service of all Greek citizens with no exceptions and accepts as its member every Greek citizen or anyone with a Greek origin, regardless of any other particular traits. As stated clearly, LA.O.S. prioritises patriotism above any other elements. The focus is on Greece and the Greek citizen. In the meantime, the party does not prevent foreigners from becoming permanent residents and citizens of the country, but in order to demonstrate their commitment to Greece the male foreigners would have to serve the Greek army. Nevertheless, the party identifies with ethno-nationalism at least 'according to the constitutional requirement that everything undertaken by the state must serve the Nation (LA.O.S., 2004, 2007). The party, therefore, seeks to defend the Greek interests, Greek minorities abroad and cultural heritage in areas where historically there is a Greek presence. Furthermore, the party seeks the union of Cyprus with Greece, and also defends the human rights of all the Greek people and their right to self-determination.

The party rejects 'complexes of chauvinism or racism', but nonetheless believes that with regard to 'the effort of minimising the problem of illegal immigration ... the attitude of bullying those who are rightly concerned about the chaos that prevails... is racism against the Greek people and every non-Greek citizen who lawfully entered and resides in the country' (LA.O.S., 2007). It also stresses that it would surely not discriminate against any other known religion or belief, but the latter should not be against the prevailing religion of Greece. Along with this, LA.O.S. express multi-nationalism, as it recognises and respects the contribution of all people and expects the same kind of attitude towards their (the people) own choices and cultural characteristics. Regarding the EU, the party does not deny the European identity of Greece but does not accept resignation of powers, which effectively invalidate the sovereignty of the country. It advocates a united Europe of nations, while maintaining

‘the right of veto over vital matters’ (LA.O.S., 2007). The party connects multi-nationalism with the struggle against globalisation, which it accuses of leading to the disappearance of cultural and national particularities, and maintains that multiculturalism is the ideological foundation of globalisation. According to the party, multiculturalism will lead to the demise of local and national cultures and their replacement with a uniform system of values imposed from above. Moreover, the party argues that Turkey should not be accepted into the EU, as it ‘does not have a common ethnic and cultural background and contains extreme Islamic elements’ (LA.O.S., 2007).

Additionally, LA.O.S. expresses anti-Semitic tendencies, e.g. that globalisation ‘[sic.is.] initiated and supported by huge multinational companies ... which are largely controlled by Zionist interests, located in the U.S., whose policy they dictate’ (LA.O.S., 2007). There is also evidence of conspiracy theory and LA.O.S. claims to have identified projects that it considers a threat to the Greek people and the Greek nation, and believes that there are enemies of Orthodoxy and Hellenism wishing to flatten the country under the banner of globalisation. Indeed, part of the party’s campaign in the 2004 elections was to ask voters to act on ‘the rejection of guilty plans against Hellenism’ by voting for LA.O.S. (see Psarras, 2010).

Another clear and related element of the ideology of LA.O.S. is xenophobia. The party views the uncontrolled influx of illegal immigrants as the most egregious crime, and as curse cast upon Greek society. Furthermore, the party notes that the majority of illegal immigrants comes from neighbouring countries, and regards them as the greatest threat to national stability. LA.O.S. asserts that the increase in unemployment is due to the influx of illegal immigrants and calls for their immediate deportation. Those of them who have jobs and housing could remain in Greece until their work is completed and should then be deported. Indeed, LA.O.S. ‘will see to their return to their homeland, even if funding is required to resettle them in their countries’ (LA.O.S., 2007). The party proposes strict control of non-EU visitors and allowing entry only to those who have a pre-arranged employment contract and housing provided by their employer who will bear the costs of any repatriation. As stated previously, LA.O.S. is opposed to Turkey joining the EU – one reason for this is that it fears a possible mass population migration from Turkey to Greece.

Constitutional issues

Also, there is populism in the programme of the party, in which it is suggested that referendums should be held for policy proposals on all major national and social problems, if proposed by 3% of the electorate. LA.O.S. calls for a referendum in order to let people decide on the issue of including religion and ethnicity on identity cards. Also, they express populist and anti-establishment sentiments. The two major parties are seen as corrupt and decadent and as leading to the destruction of Greece, indifferent to the problems of the people and serving only the interests of entrepreneurs. Indeed, it is emphasised that all previous Greek governments have been characterised by submissiveness, for they have been servile to the U.S. on foreign policy, ignoring the Greek national interests.

Undemocratic characteristics are not expressed in the party programme. LA.O.S. emphasises that it seeks to rupture the dominance of the political establishment through democratic processes, but moreover the party stresses that ‘we must seek the stability of the institution of the Higher Authority by ensuring the continued respect towards and acceptance of the primate’ (LA.O.S., 2007). The Higher Authority should not be the result of partisan compromises. Indeed, the party proposes the establishment of an optimum council that would advise the president. LA.O.S. calls for the discontinuation of government subsidies to political parties and expresses a preference for a proportional representation electoral system where the threshold for entering the parliament is set at 5%.

Law and security

With respect to law and order and militarism, LA.O.S. proposes strict enforcement of the law, imposing life sentences on abusers of public money and repeat offenders, strict penalties for killing police officers, judges and priests, and the creation of special courts for smugglers and drug traffickers, paedophiles and child rapists under all of whom should be brought to court under special laws that would not exclude the possibility of imposing the death penalty (death penalty is a penalty, not a law in its own right) (LA.O.S., 2007). In the meantime, the police need to be adequately equipped with the necessary infrastructure and have a sufficient number staff. According to the party, a powerful defence force is necessary to prevent potential

threats and address current risks. Therefore, funds for defence should be considered a basic and immediate priority for the state budget.

Additionally the party argues that Greece should have the best possible equipment and 'gradually become a nuclear power' (LA.O.S., 2007). LA.O.S. aims to reduce imports of weapons systems and stimulate the development of a domestic arms industry. The party states that the morale of the armed forces should be raised and military service should neither be reduced nor unreasonably and unnecessarily prolonged. LA.O.S. even suggested the formation of an army consisting of '100,000 troops' and proposed 'basic military coaching in schools and frequent training of reservists in order to familiarise themselves with new weapons and technology' (LA.O.S., 2007). Additionally, in order to offer extra support to the armed forces, LA.O.S. proposes 'the right to any family with more than three children to send a child to military school without examination if he (or she) meets the qualification criteria' (LA.O.S., 2007).

Morality

LA.O.S. expresses support for traditional morality and hopes to address the low birth rate by supporting families with more than three children. The party wants to stimulate the sense of family, which it considers the basic 'cell of society and the source of mental development and integration of personality' (LA.O.S., 2007). Abortion is condemned from a Christian moral-spiritual perspective. In general, LA.O.S. espouses religious ethics and considers the Greek Orthodox Church as 'the mother of the new Greek state' (LA.O.S., 2004). The party wants to protect Greek Orthodox Christian culture and stresses that 'education will be nationalism-centred and would aim to develop a model of modest and virtuous men based on the standards of the teaching of Jesus Christ' (LA.O.S., 2004, 2007). Meanwhile, with the teaching of Greek-Christian ideals and history, LA.O.S. intends to raise the morale of the Armed Forces. Moreover, the party proposes to establish an educational centre each diocese and invite the clergy to lead the struggle against globalisation. Indeed, LA.O.S. 'does not accept a Europe that does not include Orthodoxy in terms of history and family; a Europe which overrides the church' (LA.O.S., 2004, 2007).

Economy and welfare

In socio-economic issues, LA.O.S. promotes a mixture of liberalism and corporatism. It is opposed to monopolies and oligopolies and intends to ‘encourage the ingenuity, creativity and entrepreneurship of Greek citizens’(LA.O.S., 2007). At the same time, it wants to encourage productivity in sectors that are vital to national output.

The party retains elements of welfare chauvinism as it emphasises that Greece will only participate in the EU as long as the country's resources are not threatened. Moreover, LA.O.S. prohibits the use of cheap illegal immigrants in the construction industry: ‘only Greeks and EU citizens should benefit from public funds supplied by the Greek taxpayers’ (LA.O.S., 2007). More specifically, it is unacceptable to

[r]emove wages of Greek employers, if it is proven that they employ low-paid illegal immigrants...[and] the treasury of Greece and the savings of Greek taxpayers should primarily benefit the Greeks, then Community citizens and then if there is room, the settlers (LA.O.S., 2007)

Employees from countries outside the EU will be hired only when a Greek worker or workers from the EU cannot fill the vacancy. Finally, LA.O.S. calls for countering illegal itinerant vendors. The party has held maximalist views on ‘national’ issues and has sought to profit from the mobilisation of nationalist sentiments (Ellinas, 2010). Karatzaferis has described LA.O.S. as ‘a profoundly democratic party’, consisting of everything from a ‘pre-dictatorship Right’ to a merger of Left and Right to a ‘Popular Liberalism’ in the official party literature. He has also stated that he supports ‘patriotism and social solidarity, taking from all ideologies and personalities I appreciate. I don't care if it's called communism, liberalism or socialism’ (Karatzaferis, 2012). However, it is often characterised as nationalist and radical right, although Karatzaferis rejects the latter term and even threatens to sue those who address the party using it. It has also been argued that its founding declaration included antidemocratic, anti-parliamentary ideas, the most conspicuous being the party’s proposal to enforce legislative decisions through a council which would include military officers and church officials.

The ideology of LA.O.S., as presented and described by the party itself, is key to understanding the policies and decisions made by the party and its members. Having said that, the interest and the aim of this research is to point out ideological elements in the party's communication strategies, and show how the latter are directly linked to the party's ideology

4.4.3. Leadership

As seen above, LA.O.S. was founded by Karatzaferis in 2000. The party emerged around the strong figure and the charismatic leadership of Karatzaferis, similarly to other leaders of radical right parties in western European countries. The personality of Karatzaferis reflects the party's political presence, and provide evidence for the importance of the leader's character as a significant factor for a party's success.

Even when Karatzaferis was a member of the ND, he had expressed affinities to the neo-fascist, radical right organization *Chrysi Avgi*. Specifically, on January 16th, 1998, broadcasting on his TV channel Telecity, he argued that the ND should cooperate with the *Chrysi Avgi*, because the latter was closer to right-wing than ND. He also praised the activism of Chrysi Avgi and contrasted it to ONNED, the youth organisation of ND, despite the latter being generally regarded as particularly radical.

LA.O.S. is often seen as a descendant of the post-authoritarian radical right on the basis of its comprehensive nationalist worldview through which it filters its programmatic positions on both foreign policy and domestic issues. This worldview explains the frequent resorting to anti-immigrant and anti-Semitic rhetoric (Ellinas, 2010) by the president and other members of the party.

LA.O.S. began as a party with a dual Orthodox Christian religious and radically nationalist political identity. Although since its foundation it has allegedly tried to 'moderate' the nationalist elements of its appeal by disciplining party members who express extreme-nationalist or neo-fascist tendencies, new radical right members have joined its ranks in recent years and some have been elected to parliament.

Popular appeal

In April 2001, the first conference of LA.O.S. took place in Paleo Faliro, near Piraeus. There, Karatzaferis tried to lay the foundations for both the ideology and the rhetorical approach that the new party would follow. Karatzaferis in his opening speech said that, '[w]e are the ones who will take Greece from the swamp of rodents, from the swamp, from the piranhas.' In the same speech he tried to justify why he welcomed the success of LePen by saying 'I welcome anyone who resists Globalisation, New World Order and Zionist Imperialism [...]' and he welcomed 'the hero Milosevic who is in court [...]' and finally 'the Libyan leader Gaddafi, who sent a delegation to attend the conference' (Karatzaferis, 2001).

This example shows clearly the populist indictment of Karatzaferis, an accusation that has lasted over the years since LA.O.S.'s foundation. It is well known that Karatzaferis has his own style that cannot be controlled. In speeches like the one mentioned above, the way the language has been used is more than recognisable. Karatzaferis chooses a raw, direct and easy way to talk to the electorate, by using words from ordinary life without a sophisticated tone, a decision that could easily be characterised as populism. His explicit way of addressing the public shows a communication skill that cannot be bettered, an advantage Karatzaferis possesses over his rivals. Even at the point where several issues and arguments do not always make total sense in light of the theme of the speech, Karatzaferis manages to gain the attention of the audience and most importantly be understood by the majority of the people. Makis Vouridis, at the time elected MP of LA.O.S., commenting on Karatzaferis' rhetoric, mentions that Karatzaferis uses public discourse very efficiently. Vouridis would be surprised if there would be consequences arising from Karatzaferis's words (quoted in Kasimatis, 2010 in Kathimerini). Karatzaferis frequently refers to the Greek economic elite as Jewish pawns of the international Zionism which is also responsible for machinating a global 'new order' (Tsiras, 2011).

In the 2001 speech Karatzaferis began to develop a highly xenophobic rhetoric by saying that: 'no illegal immigrants in Greece...jobs to the Greeks first...we are not victims, we are not blind... Greece belongs to Orthodox Greeks' (Karatzaferis, 2001). The manifesto of 2004 follows the same positions on immigrants, and proposes to combat illegal immigration through the modernisation of ports, installation of

navigational control systems, and by combating unfair competition caused by illegal street vendors (LA.O.S., 2004). In the party's official programme for the national elections of 2004 illegal immigrants are presented as 'the worst problem currently plaguing Greek society', and continues: 'together we accept illegal immigrants from neighbouring countries which have territorial claims against us, and which threaten the security and integrity of our border areas', and proposes that: 'rural development and rebuilding the rural police should help our farmers feel more secure without having themselves to deal with the excess burden of illegal immigrants' (LA.O.S., 2004)

LA.O.S., as noted by Karatzaferis himself, is not alone in the effort to rupture and overthrow the status quo that governs the country. To help him achieve his vision he had as an ally and supporter, Archbishop Christodoulos, and several prominent members of the Greek Orthodox Church (Tsiras, 2011). Psarras gives an overview of the relationship that Karatzaferis had with Archbishop Christodoulos. Their relationship began in 1987 when Karatzaferis (then a journalist) was writing an article about demonstrations of the clergy concerning ecclesiastical property, which was among the political issues in which Christodoulos was active as a young priest (Tsiras, 2011). After the death of Archbishop Christodoulos, Karatzaferis argued that he not only helped in the election of the Archbishop but that they had jointly developed 'an action plan' (Psarras, 2010). This statement was based on the words of Christodoulos arguing that voters of LA.O.S. were 'good Christians and not right-wing' (Psarras, 2010:125-126). However, even after the death of Archbishop Christodoulos, LA.O.S. did not lack supporters from inside the Church community. As Charitos notes, 'Christianity can serve as a protective shield of national civilisation against the waves of Muslim immigrants and the cultural utopianism of the left' (Charitos, 2008 in Tsiras, 2011:114).

In the meantime, during the prefectural election campaign of 2002 it was discovered that *Chrysi Avgi* (Golden Dawn) had collaborated with LAOS by providing four representatives as candidates with LA.O.S. The neo-Nazi party of *Chrysi Avgi* has caused many conflicts regarding its legitimacy and approaches. In an attempt to draw the public's attention away from elements linking LAOS to the radical right, Karatzaferis stated that there are Jews, homosexuals and Gypsies on the same ballot, but he could not reveal their names. Just after this statement the Central Jewish

Council on 9 October 2002, released the following announcement:

[T]he Central Jewish Board considers it necessary to specify that the declaration by the candidate Karatzaferis that Jews participate in his ballot is not true. Karatzaferis himself, for many years, had tried to manipulate and distort the truth concerning Jewish issues. (Greek Human Rights List, 2002)

As Psarras (2010) points out, similar to other radical right parties, in LA.O.S. the rhetoric of the leader is as important to the official party as manifestos are. As seen above in the section examining the structure of the party, the organisation of the party is structured around the figure of the leader both ‘in statute and in practice’ (Ellinas, 2010:140). Ellinas (2010) stresses that, based on the statute of the party, the president is the one who administers the party in most of its functions, e.g. organising the agenda, appointing officials, and introducing the party’s ideology to the electorate. The electoral campaigns, as will be shown below, have been based on the figure of Karatzaferis and, therefore, LA.O.S. is seen by many as his personal achievement.

Undoubtedly the party leader plays a key role in the party’s communication strategy. In radical right parties especially, the leader is crucial for the party’s success (see Chapter 2). The leader is the face that requests the support of potential voters in order to achieve electoral success in the name of the party. In the case of LA.O.S. Karatzaferis has proved to be a charismatic leader with strong interface with the audience over time. As such a strong personality, Karatzaferis represents the main face of the party. His popular appeal places him high in the party’s priorities when constructing its communication strategies. Having gained considerable electoral support between 2000 and 2010, LAOS and especially Karatzaferis have had significant influence on the national political scene.

4.5. Analysis of the context

4.5.1. Beyond text

In an effort to identify the communication tactics of the political parties under examination, a qualitative analysis of the actual content of the manifestos is necessary. To achieve this, it is important to go beyond the first impressions created the mere

presentation of official manifestos, and conduct an extensive analysis of them seeking to detect the core ideology of the parties under examination. The emphasis on the rhetoric in the official documents contributes to the structure of the general image and identity of the party, which is proposed to the electorate. Ultimately, however, this is only one aspect of the whole communication strategy of the parties in their effort to attract the electorate's support.

LA.O.S.'s manifestos suggest that the party openly attacks the Greek constitution and calls for referendums on important issues; asks and demands respect for the culture, language, and history of any nation; calls for the definition of migration and the establishment of specific rules on this issue; states that it fully endorses constitutional legality and democracy; takes a stand in defence of human rights, culture and natural environment and finally, declares that it embraces all Greeks regardless of party origin, and opposes any form of fanaticism, arrogance and totalitarianism, including globalisation and the 'new order' (LA.O.S., 2007). From this declaration it appears that LA.O.S. adopts in its rhetoric many of the typical positions of modern radical right parties, e.g. intense scepticism about, if not opposition to the European Union and its institutions; conducting referendums on every legal movement considered critical for the country's future, in a general effort to 'flatter' the people; accepting democratic legitimacy; imposing restrictions on immigration, while mentioning a 'new world order' that puts the national identity and culture of Greece in danger.

According to the party's manifesto of August 2007, LA.O.S. is described as an Orthodox popular party, but not a populist one, that aims to protect all non-privileged Greeks. Similarly, as mentioned in the manifesto of 2004, the 2007 document states that it is not anti-American, yet implying that Greece will never obey the wishes of the U.S.; it is not anti-European party but implies that it will never accept the assignment of the national sovereignty to Brussels; it is not a nationalist party but this does not mean that they do not value the extent to which Greek culture has influenced mankind; it is not a radical-right party but underlines the benefits of the collapse of communism and the problems created when it was imposed; it is not a racist party but problems resulting from illegal immigration should not be ignored, and finally, it is not a

religious-fundamentalist party but emphasises that Orthodox Christianity is the predominant religion in Greece (LA.O.S., 2007).

Nevertheless, in the 2004 programme it was maintained that the party was founded because foreign powers wanted to impose a new situation on Greek people, foreign and extraneous to the traditions of the Greek race. In order to exploit anti-American sentiments among the Greek populace, Karatzaferis accuses the two main parties of 'slave-like' behaviour toward the U.S., which has led the country 'into a situation that is going to be worse than Nazism' (see Ellinas, 2010:138). LA.O.S. denounces the existence of corruption in the country and believes that Greece has entered a period in which the uncontrolled entry of multinational companies and cause unemployment and poverty. Also, LA.O.S. seeks to ensure national independence and sovereignty, to provide equal opportunities for all Greeks in a country where fairness, parity and social justice should prevail (LA.O.S., 2007).

More specifically, concerning immigrants and other minorities in Greece, LA.O.S. believes that: a) male immigrants who wish to become citizens should first undertake their military service; b) immigrants should pay taxes but that does not mean that this will ensure their legitimacy; c) there is a need for a strictly enforced immigration policy which should not exploit the immigrant population; d) a solution must be found to stop the growing demographic problem that threatens the maintenance of the Greek race and the Greek cultural identity, because this would diminish the Greek population and its cultural identity; e) if Greece continues with its current immigration policy, Greeks by 2050 will be a minority in their own country; f) in Greece there is an imported form of crime that is directly related to the large number of illegal immigrants; g) the population of Muslims in Thrace should be equal to Orthodox Christians in other contested, non-Greek areas, such as Imbros, Tenedos and Istanbul; and h) the Greek state offers too much assistance to Gypsies and Muslims, which conduces to a situation where these two groups do not even need to work while, at the same time, the Greek family suffers (LA.O.S., 2007). Finally, in a text entitled *The documents of shame*, which can be read on LA.O.S.'s website, the party accuses Greek MPs of other parties of an anti-Hellenic attitude, because they allegedly vote in favour of granting voting rights to immigrants and set in danger

national interests in the Greek province of Macedonia in northern Greece and in the Aegean sea.

Despite the 2007 manifesto the party appears to be promoting contradicting policies, as it appears to support both the education of foreign students at all levels, while at the same time it calls for the promotion of intercultural education in the form of a national/Greek curriculum. An anti-immigrant position can be seen, however, in the adoption of certain policy exclusions: after calling for electronic health cards for more immediate and more effective protection of citizens' health, the party notes that this card should be given only to legal residents. Finally, the party identity, once again, is identified with Greek Orthodox Christianity, the programme of August 2007 reconfirms that Orthodox Christianity is the predominant religion, nothing that Hellenism and Christianity have been inextricably intertwined for centuries, which necessitates the recognition of the national interests of the church (LA.O.S., 2007).

By analysing further the LA.O.S. manifesto of 11 August 2007 we can draw more conclusions. LA.O.S. understands very well what concepts and rhetoric its opponents use in order to characterise it as a radical right party. Thus, it is quick to emphasise that it is neither anti-American nor anti-European; neither nationalist, nor racist and extremist; neither undemocratic nor populist. These are all positions which are seen as determining whether a modern party is of the far-right. (Theofilopoulos, 2008). LA.O.S. argues that it is not populist, but at the same time invokes the feelings of the people and tries to manipulate them. Also, it constantly denounces the status quo that has brought the country to the 'brink of disaster', constantly refers to the underprivileged, promises everything to everyone, constantly expresses its faith in the Eastern Orthodox Church by attempting to flatter the religious sentiment of the Greeks, and stresses that the problems of the Greeks can be blamed on immigrants, the U.S. and neighbouring countries (LA.O.S., 2007).

Still however LA.O.S. argues that it is neither racist nor nationalist and fundamentalist. Indeed, the language used in the official programme of LA.O.S. is so careful that one can hardly find any overtly racist positions. But nevertheless it is a deeply xenophobic party. LA.O.S. considers immigrants as the source of a variety of social problems like unemployment, poverty, crime, and regards them as a serious

threat to national cohesion, national identity and culture, even the existence of Greece itself. A candidate of the party for the 2004 national elections refers to immigration in the following manner:

[I] do not want an Albanian neighbour, but a Greek one. I prefer neighbours who will enter my house through the door at 6pm, not those who break into my house through the windows at 3am. If this makes me a far rightist, then I am! (quoted in Ellinas, 2010:138)

So the party proposes a policy of exclusion of immigrants by asking for tight immigration policies and a number of restrictions on permanent settlement in the country, forced conscription and taxation of immigrants without guaranteeing their settlement, exclusion of immigrants from health services and from work, which suggests that the Greeks should pay more attention to whom they choose to offer employment (Theofilopoulos, 2008). Karatzaferis characterises them as ‘useless’ people who do not offer anything to the country and are lazy, and exploit the system. LA.O.S. argues that Greece should use its cultural heritage and Greek education to make immigrant children ‘to be Greeks in soul and in spirit’ (Ellinas, 2010:138).

LA.O.S. refers to itself as an ‘anthropocentric’ and ‘modern’ party. But how anthropocentric and how modern can a party be when in 2007 in a developed western country that is a member of the European Union their programme refers to a predominant religion, speaks of the collapse of communism as if they were the U.S. during the Cold War, and regards minorities as citizens of third and fourth class, if not as enemies of the nation? Also, how can it not be an anti-American party and an anti-European one, when it essentially states in its programme that Greeks are slaves of the U.S. and do whatever the latter command, that the European Union is judged only through the issue of national sovereignty and with respect to the depreciation of Greek culture.

As seen above (see Chapter 2), Hainsworth (2000) claimed that the post-war radical right is like a ‘complex alchemy’, a mixture of divergent ideological positions and political principles: nationalism, authoritarianism, xenophobia and anti-communism, combined with liberalism, and anti-capitalism, statism and anti-statism and populism. These are contradictory elements of the ideological alloy created by the

politically extreme right, covering almost the entire range of the left-right spectrum (see Betz, 1998; Hainsworth, 2008; Georgiadou, 2008). The ‘complex alchemy’ of the radical right maintains the inherent political opportunism of this political family; the post-war radical right is malleable, adapting to current demands, without renouncing historical origins and selective affinities with the ideological current of anti-Enlightenment.

4.5.2. Organised Campaigns

Apart from the qualitative content analysis of the manifestos, it is important to examine the party’s brands (posters and party insignia). Following a rather semiotic approach where everything is regarded as a text (see Chandler, 2007). LA.O.S.’s party insignia is more than just a logo; it is about the political message; it is about the name; it is about the personalities. According to article 4 of the Manifesto of LA.O.S. 2004: ‘This Party is entitled LA.O.S’. The emblem of the party consists of four white arrows in a symbolic sign, which is a green wild olive branch.



Figure 4:2 The Emblem of LA.O.S.

The arrows and the wild olive branch are embedded in an azure square while the whole complex is surrounded by a red circle (LA.O.S., 2004, 2007). This has a strong link to Greek mythology.

Based on mythology, the inventor of sport and the founder of the Olympic games was Iphitos Hercules, who planted the first wild olive at Olympia. Iphitos Hercules had four brothers, Paionaios, Epimidi, Iasio and Ida. The older brother went to run at Olympia one day. Hercules crowned the winner with an olive branch from the

tree he himself had planted there. Since then, it was the custom to crown winners of the Olympic games with wreaths of wild olive branches. The winners were considered respected persons who were helped to win by the divine grace and favour of the gods. It was also believed that through the olive wreath all divine forces were passed on to them. The same symbolism was conveyed by the red woollen ribbons that adorned the athletes. The olive wreath was the highest award for any athlete and for every single citizen (the verb ‘crown’ was synonymous with reward) (see Psarras, 2010).

What was considered a symbol of physical and mental excellence for centuries has acquired a new role. In modern use the symbol has become associated with extremist right wing organisations with the adaptation of the Arrow Cross (*Nyilaskereszt*) symbol which was used in Hungary in the 1930s as the symbol of the leading Hungarian fascist political party, *Nyilaskeresztes Párt* (see Figure 4:3) as well as in the standards of the Nazi party in Germany. The symbol consists of two green double-ended arrows in a cross configuration on a white circular background, much like the German Nazi swastika. The arrow cross symbol remains outlawed in Hungary. The symbol has been used by neo-Nazi organisations in England like the ‘League of St. George (1974) (see Figure 4:5) which appears to be 90% identical to the emblem L.A.O.S with the only difference being the lack of laurels and the use of different colours. Similar insignia have been used by other racist organisations based in America, e.g. the ‘Nationalist Movement, 1987, a radical-racist organisation in America in favour of the supremacy of the White race against blacks and Jews or - WASP: White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (see Figure 4:4); the symbol has also been used by the Greek organization *Chrysi Avgi* (1980) (see Figure 4:6), a neo-Nazi organization in Greece. In Golden Dawn’s case the expanding cross is used as the initial symbol on the cover photograph of the first issue of the magazine along with the swastika of the Thule secret society.

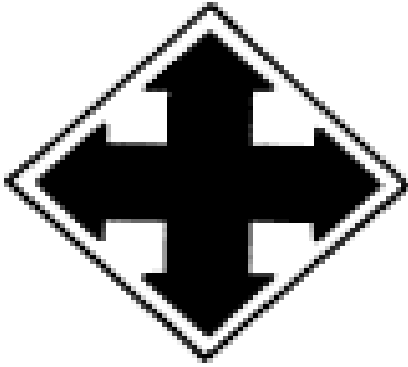


Figure 4:3 Emblem of *Nyilaskeresztes Párt* , Hungary , 1930s

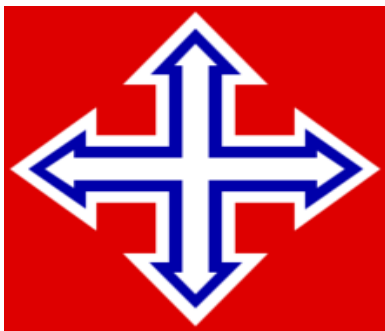


Figure 4:4 Emblem of Nationalist Movement, USA



Figure 4:5 Emblem of League of St. George, England

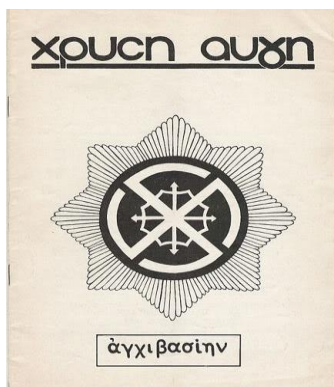


Figure 4:6 Front page of the magazine of *Chrysi Avgi* (1980), Greece

The underlying meaning of the arrow cross is to express expansion in all directions. In this, it is synonymous with all the Christian crosses used to represent global evangelisation, the effort to spread the doctrines of the Christian faith in all directions. The sign is also used in cartography. On some maps it signifies monuments or towers.

In an interview, taken by C. Muibua and G. Stamkos, entitled: 'I am not a nationalist, Place me with Peron!', Karatzaferis comments on the emblem:

ZENITH: 'The logo of your party looks surprisingly similar to the one of the Ku Klux Klan. Why do you think this is the case?'

Karatzaferis: 'We see things in a different perspective'

ZENITH: 'Should I show you?'

Karatzaferis: 'Surely you can show me!'

ZENITH: 'There you are' (showing the two logos)

Karatzaferis: 'What is the relationship with one another?'

ZENITH: 'The circle, the cross, the colour [...]'

Karatzaferis: 'I am not familiar with the case and it is the first time I have seen it.' Referring to the circle: 'here is ancient Greece (pointing to the crown of laurels), red is Byzantium, (as LA.O.S. stands in favour of theocratic Byzantium) and here, we want to expand Greece with four arrows: east, west, north and south.'

ZENITH: 'The red, the white and the blue...don't you see the resemblance?'

Karatzaferis: 'So what if they look alike? And what should be done about it? I have never used black myself anywhere. Today it is the first time I have seen it.' (Zenith, vol.13:2007).

Adonis Georgiadis, another leading member of LA.O.S. and MP, referring to the party logo on his website, formally admitted that the banner of the party has been used in the past and is still being used by right wing and Nazi organisations and parties across the world. Nevertheless, in an effort to convince the public that his party has no ideological relationship with them, despite the-selection and use of conspicuously similar emblems, he argues: 'We put on the arrows to show that the Greek spirit extends to all parts of the horizon, which makes it universal. Numerous organisations worldwide have used Greek symbols, but this does not mean anything' (Georgiadis,

2009). For Georgiadis, the Third Reich of Adolf Hitler used the swastika, one of the ‘most ancient symbols of humanity and Hellenism’, and admits that right-wing extremists around the world have shown preference for this type of cross. ‘So what?’ the politician comments. In any case, for Georgiadis, after two years in Parliament, only

[...]malicious people, those who are our political opponents, try to connect our party with totalitarian theories. [...] We are by far the most democratic party in Greece; evident in that we are the only ones asking for referendums on all serious issues, as is done in Switzerland, Canada, France, Italy, the U.S., and elsewhere. And those, so-called ‘democrats’ have not even called for a Referendum in forty years (Georgiadis, 2009)

The major figure in the posters of LA.O.S. is Karatzaferis himself. As mentioned before, he is not just the party’s president, and not just the founder of LA.O.S.; Karatzaferis is the personification of the party. In the posters he appears confident, strong, ready to defend, and well-prepared for any difficulty; ready to ‘strike the political establishment’ with a pair of boxing gloves, and to make valuable changes for the people and the country; exactly how a leader should be. Karatzaferis chooses an informal appearance, making himself more approachable to common people, something that corresponds with the populist profile of the party in general.



Figure 4.7: Poster of the president of LA.O.S.



Figure 4:8 Poster of the President of LA.O.S.



Figure 4:9 Poster of the President of LA.O.S.

It is important to stress that throughout the party's official documents, its official website, its official paper and in the official electoral campaigns and posters, blue, white and red colours dominate - the colours of the emblem. When examining the posters of the party, the idea of a person-oriented campaign is very clear. The posters are iconic, for they act as a signifier through the figure of Karatzafieris; but there is also some symbolic signage and that is the party insignia. Using Karatzafieris as the signifier of its campaign, LA.O.S. reinforces the importance of the leader in his

popular appeal. In other words, branding the party's president is a well-placed argument for LA.O.S..

Meanwhile, in the posters there is often a rhyme between words. Its slogan 'Hand in hand (because he makes a difference)' became one of the most successful electoral catch-phrases in the period under consideration, and created a direct link to the party. 'Hand' has been used several times by reporters, politicians, researchers and academics, as a pun in order to make a reference to LA.O.S. (Figures 4:7; 4:8; 4:9). The text in the posters addresses the desire for security as well as anti-establishment sentiments, and highlights trust in the judgement of the electorate.

Another brand that can be easily recognised is the name of the party itself. LA.O.S., the acronym of the party's name is a great communication 'trick'. The pronunciation of the name is an issue; with importance placed on the accent. 'LA.O.S..' in the Greek language means 'people'. In several different points in the official documents, as well as in the speeches of the president and other party members, emphasis is given on the placement of the accent within the name.

'The reality is that LA.O.S., with the emphasis on the O, correspond to the Greek word for people which is currently the most central to democratic forces in country; today LA.O.S., with the accent on the O, [...]reflects clearer than any other political party the agonies, desires, needs, and a vision for all Greeks. The reality is that LA.O.S., [...] has as basic and fundamental principles the total respect for the constitution, democracy and all democratic processes; today LA.O.S., [...]is the only political party struggling for genuine parliamentary democracy and the sovereignty of people (LA.O.S., 2004) (see Chapter 8 on discussion).

4.6. Outcomes

Having determined the characteristics of the radical right family, we need to ask the question: what kind of party is LA.OS? The party rejects its placement at the radical right pole and describes itself as a 'popular party'. But the programmatic positions (in favour of plebiscitary democracy, a fraternal House, but against illegal immigration), leave no doubt that LA.OS belongs to the parties of the radical right,

with features that reflect the nature of the third wave. In the meantime, shortly after the election of 2004, Karatzaferis understood that LA.O.S. was very close to scoring the big goal of gaining admissions to the parliament. But in order to make that happen, he also understood that he needed to shed the radical right label, an objective that became his main concern. The effort was twofold. First he attempted to rid the party of the stigma of extremism which at least until a little after the elections of 2004. Karatzaferis eventually succeeded in abolishing this stigma by stating that he respected and honoured both the various national elements that his party unique, as well as democracy and its institutions, not only of the Greek State but also of the European Union.

However, from the first signs of the manifesto of 2007 it is clear that the political position of LA.O.S. towards the EU favours a loose relationship between nation-states of the European Union. LA.O.S. rejects the Constitution and ‘the idea of a European super-state,’ believing that ‘the dominant institution in making decisions should remain each country’s National Assembly’. It also adds that the European Union Constitution is nothing but ‘the lion of the New World Order which wants to turn Europe’s citizens into effectively-controlled slave-like tools, which is unprecedented in human history’ (LA.O.S., 2007) The party declares that it respects ‘the independence, language, history, culture and traditions of each nation and every state of the EU’ but afterwards almost smugly stated that ‘European culture is rooted in *our* [i.e. the Greek] values and virtues’. The 2007 manifesto tries to clarify that the party opposes ‘any kind of social marginalisation, any form of racism, intolerance and anti-Semitism’, that it respects ‘absolutely all nations and religions,’ while clearly supporting the party’s anti-immigrant stance. LA.O.S. gives high priority to controlling migration by establishing absolutely certain rules. As the party underlines, uncontrolled and illegal immigration is a

[t]ool of the New Order ... [while] it is necessary to preserve for Greek citizens the right to work, the rights guaranteed to workers, labour relationships and fees. All the negative aspects of uncontrolled illegal immigration are no longer visible, they began to create ghettos in cities, and crime is at a zenith. Limitation and control of immigration is a direct national and social necessity (LA.O.S., 2007)

Nevertheless LA.O.S. makes clear that it is a party that espouses democracy, and fights in the name of democracy. It is a party that ‘embraces all the Greeks, whatever their political basis’ as long as they do ‘not align themselves with fanaticism, arrogance, totalitarianism, globalisation and the New World Order’ (LA.O.S., 2007). In the context of the policies of LA.O.S., there is a turning point in the form of the party’s first published political programme which was later removed from nearly all party websites. The reason is that the program of 2004 is inconsistent with the principle of ‘solidarity’.

Beyond that, in the LA.O.S. manifesto of 2007 the main emphasis is on national issues. There are elements in favour of welfare chauvinism and against immigration, which is considered responsible for imported crime ‘...[sic which] is directly related to the large number of illegal economic migrants who organize themselves in closed ranks so that the police find it difficult to control them’ (LA.O.S., 2004). Moreover, there is a strong negative attitude towards the mainstream established parties which deny the possibility of holding direct democratic referendum. Further to this, LA.O.S. proposes ‘to establish the possibility of revoking the parliamentary status of those proven to have acted contrary to their election commitments’ (LA.O.S. 2007).

4.7 Conclusion

This brief survey of LA.O.S.’s texts indicates that, in general, the major issues that LA.O.S. discusses are the economy, public administration, foreign relations followed by environmental issues and health. At a certain level, this thematic division might not have been found to differ from any other party in the Greek political arena, a fact that might suggest that LA.O.S. does not want to differentiate itself from ‘mainstream’ Greek parties. From a quick examination we can say that LA.O.S. presents a profile of a party interested in a wide range of policies by using a more populist rhetorical approach.

However, from what has been examined so far, it is clear that although LA.O.S. uses different rhetorical and communication techniques their goal remains to establish and create necessary emotional connections with voters. Branding through posters and party insignia enables LA.O.S to communicate their goals and ideals for the upcoming

elections efficiently and emphatically. In political branding, instead of attaching a product or service to a brand, political marketers attach ideals and promises to an individual brand (see Chapter 2). In the case of LA.O.S., the personality of Karatzaferis, the emblem of the party as well as the combination of colours, the logo of the campaigns, has one specific purpose: to find common ground and an emotional connection with voters. This is the main aim of the party's communication strategy.

LA.O.S. appears to have a complete understanding of how political communication works. The proof of this is its successful campaigns and promotions. By hiding the primary radical ideologies that were established from the moment of its foundation, LA.O.S. presents a modern and popular profile that makes it a tempting and applicable choice for the electorate. This image contributes to election gains, for the party and a strong presence in the political scene. Yet, further research (see Chapter 8) clearly indicates the elements that distinguish the communication strategies of LA.O.S. from other parties in the Greek national political scene, which should justify the theory of the Trojan horse that was discussed above.

5. The case of *Schweizerische Volkspartei* (SVP)

5.1. Introduction

In Switzerland, in the 1960s, a number of small parties appeared. Their political agenda included anti-immigration, tough asylum-seeker policies and other policies familiar to parties in the radical right family, which led to enhanced support and success (see Hainsworth, 2008:44). The *Schweizerische Volkspartei* (SVP) by sharing with other radical right parties a common belief in a ‘united and sovereign population and a xenophobic rhetoric’ (Coffé and Voorpostel, 2010:436) is thus identifiable as a member of the radical right family.

The party has been classified as a ‘cultural and nationalist populist’ party (Albertazzi and McDonnell, 2008, Cranmer, 2011:290), based on the incorporation of core elements of ‘right-wing populist ethno-nationalism under its former leader, Christoph Blocher, from the mid 1990s’ (Betz, 2009:99; Mazzoleni, 2003 in Cranmer, 2011:290-291). Christoph Blocher is considered the ‘architect of the party’s turn to populism’, and responsible for the party’s ‘radicalisation’ (Albertazzi, 2009:2). It was after 1999, when SVP under his leadership gained national attention and started to become a major factor in the country’s politics.

The party has seen success under the leadership of Ueli Maurer, party leader from 1996-2008, followed by Toni Brunner. Informal supervision by Christoph Blocher, also helped the party to become the largest party in Bundesversammlung (Federal Assembly), Switzerland’s federal parliament, in the national elections of 2011 (admin.ch, 2013) with 54 members in Nationalrat (National Council) and 5 in the Ständerat (Council of States).

5.2. Background – Foundation and Electoral success

5.2.1. The origins of the party

On their official website, SVP present an extended version of the history of the party and its origins, which follows the evolution of the party from the beginning of the

20th century until the present. Based on this information, the party was founded in 1971 by the merger of Bauern-, Gewerbe- und Bürgerpartei (Party of Farmers, Traders and Independents) (BGB), itself a merger between several farmers' parties at a cantonal level, which dates from 1917, and Sozialpolitische Gruppe (Democratic Party), another coalition of parties from different cantons, which took place during the Second World War (1942) (SVP, 2013).

In his introductory chapter on the history of SVP, Skenderovic (2009) follows the development of the elements that contributed to the emergence of SVP, and provides information on the origins of the party. Starting from the late 1910s with the various cantonal farmers' parties that started to experience electoral support and gained representation at a national level, until 1936 and the official foundation of BGB.

Having said that, the BGB's purpose was to represent local Swiss traders and farmers against big business and international capital, while opposing all kinds of left-wing ideology. It managed to become a reliable political partner for Bürgerlich-Demokratische Partei Schweiz (Swiss Conservative People's Party) (BDP) and Freisinnig-Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party), and also contributed to the establishment of consensual politics, social agreements and policies of economic growth. As a result, it achieved an active presence in the Swiss political arena (Skenderovic, 2009:124-127).

In 1971, the BGB merged with Sozialpolitische Gruppe from the cantons of Glarus and Graubünden (Geden, 2006:94, Skenderovic, 2009:128, SVP, 2013) and changed its name to SVP. For SVP, the policies that determine the profile of the party remained unchanged, although the change of name brought about a 'new dawn' at a wider federal level (SVP, 2013).

Under the presidency of Fritz Hofmann, the party also offered a re-organisation change. In addition, during a series of party conferences that took place in 1977 and 1978, SVP managed to present a new programme (SVP, 2013). During this period the party obtained 9.9% of the federal vote. By marking a new political direction introducing new issues to the political agenda and by reforming its political campaigning style, the party aimed to approach a larger number of voters and become

even more appealing at a national level (Skenderovic, 2009:128). Initially however, SVP did not attract ‘any increased support beyond that which the BGB had gained, remaining at around 11% of the vote through the 1970s and 1980s’ and serving mostly as a junior member in coalitions since 1959 (Hainsworth, 2008:44).

In 1991, SVP became the strongest party in Zürich for the first time, with 20.2% of the vote. Having said that, the party ‘broke through in the early 1990s in both Zürich and Switzerland as a whole, and experienced dramatically increased results in elections’ (Skenderovic, 2009:147). Its popularity has increased even more ever since. This has allowed it to go from ‘a conservative, Protestant and rural party into that of a right-wing populist force’ (Sciarini et al. 2003 in Bühlmann, Nicolett and Selb 2006:3; Hutter and Giugni, 2009:433; Fontana, Hardmeier and Sidler, 2006:243; Church, 2004:64).

In 1992, SVP was the only party to speak against Switzerland's accession to the European Economic Area (EEA), which increased the popularity of the party even further. Since then, SVP has projected itself as the guardian of Swiss independence, defended Swiss neutrality and committed itself to maintaining a restrictive immigration policy. These stances, along with support for neo-liberal and anti-state positions in economic and fiscal policy (Mazzoleni, 2003; Skenderovic, 2013) as well as its preference for lean management and a good business environment (SVP, 2013), have resulted in its ever-increasing support in more recent years.

5.2.2. The electoral breakthrough

At the 1999 election, Blocher, a leading politician of SVP and a successful Zurich businessman, managed to make an impact on the national political scene. Blocher, who has been in charge of the Zurich SVP since 1977, developed a new radical right-wing populist agenda, which was similar to that of other radical-right parties in Western Europe (Mazzoleni and Skenderovic 2007; Helms, 1997; Betz, 2004). By adopting such a populist agenda in the 1990s (see Skenderovic, 2007), the party managed to attract its largest share of votes (nearly 23%) in the 1999 federal election, thus becoming the second largest party with its number of seats reaching forty-four in the lower house of *Nationalrat*, a result that Hainsworth (2008) has described as having

‘fuelled a discussion on right-wing extremism in the country’ (2008:44). This was the greatest ‘increase of votes for any party in the entire history of the Swiss proportional electoral system, which was introduced in 1919’ (Skenderovic, 2009:150, Hainsworth, 2008:44).

According to Marcus (2000), under the influence of Blocher the traditionally conservative SVP, adopted a more radical approach by setting its electoral campaign on an anti-immigrant and xenophobic platform and objecting to any possible entry of Switzerland into the European Union (McGann and Kitschelt, 2005:12). The party also adopted propositions, which idealised the Swiss nation (Stockemer, 2012, Hutter and Giugni, 2009:435), with Blocher himself, trying to ‘harness Swiss resentment at Jewish organizations’ efforts to persuade Swiss banks to honour debts to Holocaust victims and their families’ (Marcus, 2000:36-37).

For Rose (2000), Blocher’s ‘Switzerland First’ views appealed to an increasing number of voters. They appreciated that his main argument was that the time had come to form a coalition based on such political stands as lowering taxes and defending national interests (2000:37); these policies appeared to have had ‘substantial popular appeal among Swiss who preferred their splendid isolation’ (Rose, 2000:37).

In 2003 the party gained the biggest share of the vote, and it ‘was awarded an additional seat on the Federal Council’ (Skenderovic, 2009:134). Campaigning on issues such as asylum, taxation cuts and reduced state intervention, the party managed to win 26.7% and increase its number of seats to fifty-five, which translates into more than one-quarter of the seats in the *Nationalrat*. SVP was the first party to win such a large number of seats since 1943 (Hainsworth, 2008:44, Norris, 2005:63) by gaining such a remarkable increase in its the popular vote. The electoral success of SVP contributed to the re-arrangement of the national political coalition; it successfully gained two places in the seven-member government (Bundesrat) (Georgiadou, 2008:401), with Blocher becoming a powerful and important member (Church, 2004:518, Betz, 2005:150) in the role of the Head of the Department of Justice and Police. Many characterise him as the architect of what SVP has become (Hainsworth, 2008; Georgiadou, 2008)

By 2007 SVP had significantly extended its appeal. Along with the changes pioneered by Blocher, the party started to concentrate on the issue of immigration. In October's elections of 2007 the party had won sixty-two parliamentary seats, increasing its voting share to almost 29%, the highest score ever recorded for a single party. Significantly, in the 2011 federal election the party gained almost 27% of the popular vote and 'managed to maintain its position as the strongest party in the Swiss national assembly and the one of the most powerful radical right-wing party in Western' Europe (see Stockemer, 2012), despite a small decrease of 2,3% since the previous election of 2007⁷. A more comprehensive presentation of SVP's electoral results is presented in Figure 5.1 below:

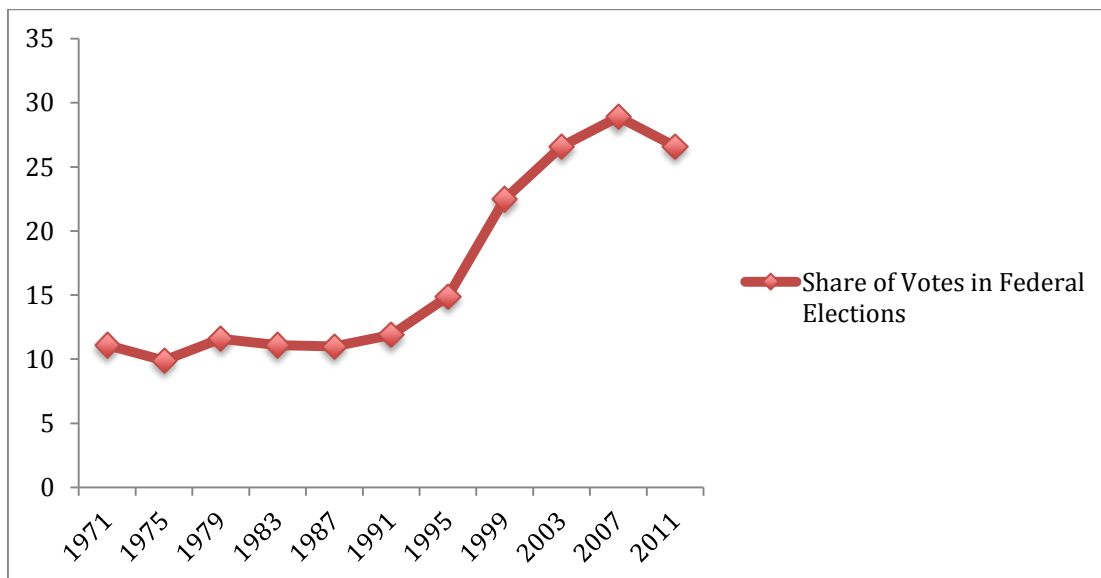


Figure 5:1 Election results since 1971 (SVP)

5.2.3. Approaches to the party's electoral success. The transformation to a major political factor and its' contributors: the opportunity, the leader, the rhetoric

In order to understand better the electoral success of SPV and its rise in the Swiss political arena a number of organisational and structural factors should be taken into account. For Skenderovic (2007), the factor which contributed most to the party's establishment in the national political scene was the fact that, unlike the other Swiss

⁷ The decrease of the support can be explained by the creation of the BDP party by former SVP members, which gained 5.4% of the vote in 2011.

radical-right parties, SVP did not have to experience the preliminary procedure of party establishment as it already had structural resources and committed voters, since it had been active for many years. In addition, as Mazzoleni and Skenderovic, (2007) underline, the party had made noticeable progress to its structure, campaign strategies and leadership associations. Having said that, SVP extended and consolidated its structure and activities, and brought its campaigns to a national level. In addition, with Blocher at the front, SVP could depend and rely on a charismatic figure that was experted great appeal to the electorate. Electoral studies show that the attractiveness of Blocher 'was a decisive factor in motivating electors to vote for SVP' (Kriesi, Lachat, Selb, Bornschieer and Helbling, 2005 in Skenderovic, 2007).

An additional factor that can explain the increasing popular support of SVP can be located in the party's ideological and policy transformation. The anti-immigration policies, along with the rejection of the idea of a European Union membership were, according to Kriesi *et al* (2005), important influences on the party's popularity. As the authors underline, the reasons for the party's success can additionally be explained by the organised electoral campaign of the 1990s, in which SVP presented the European integration as a threat to the country's national identity, an approach that will follow the party's rhetoric for the following years until today (in Skenderovic, 2007).

Finally, SVP successfully managed to play a dual role as both opposing but also participating in the political system. This offered the opportunity to create an 'anti-establishment rhetoric' that resonated with the electorate's disapproval of the established political parties. Additionally, it showed the party's capacity of holding executive political positions and sustaining its appeal to its traditional voters (McGann and Kitschelt, 1999).

As McGann and Kitschelt underline (2005) , since the mid-1980s, Blocher was 'able to gain control of the Zurich section of SVP' and start to campaign aggressively against potential future 'Swiss international commitments, such as joining the European Union' (2005:8). In their work comparing Austrian and Swiss radical right parties, McGann and Kitschelt suggest that the electoral success of the so-called 'Blocherian' cantons [...] have strengthened Blocher's position within the party' thus

becoming 'the main vehicle of the Swiss anti-internationalist right' (McGann and Kitschelt, 2005:8).

For McGann and Kitschelt (2005), Blocher managed to maximise SVP's ideological resources to gather its main electorate and at the same time attract new potential voters instantaneously. This was achieved through the same appeal that he brought to bear on winning over the 'new radical-right' electorate, 'while at the same time retaining the traditional SVP electorate and attracting a broader anti-EU constituency' (McGann and Kitschelt, 2005:8). Having said that, in the national referendum, more than 60% of the voters supported the measures proposed by Blocher on tough legislation on asylum, making Switzerland a country with one the strictest asylum regimes in Europe (Hainsworth, 2008:45).

Over the last 20 years, SVP has effectively transformed itself from a conservative party into a radical right party. With SVP gaining major support at a national level and demanding full implementation of its policies, such as those on migration and financial austerity (Hainsworth, 2008:45), many believed that the stability of the party system was in danger. Betz (2005) similarly stresses that as a result of the SPV increased popularity, the 'country's 'magic formula', which since 1959 has determined the composition of the Swiss government and has been the main pillar of the country's consociational system, came under increasing pressure' (Georgiadou, 2008:401).

The party, according to data from the European Election Database (NSD), has 'pursued conservative social and economic policies, including lower taxes and reduced spending, as well as the protection of Swiss agriculture and industry' (nsd.uib.no, 2013) and while opposing Swiss membership in international bodies such as the UN and EU. All proposals and policies that previously characterised SVP have turned it from a moderate agrarian party to a more extreme (radical) populist party (Church 2000:217-218; Mudde, 2007:58).

Mazzoleni and Skenderovic (2007) consider the nature of the transformation of SVP from an established 'centre-right party' into a 'radical right-wing populist party'. While the party was developing into a challenger party, 'defiant of the rules and agreements that structured the Swiss system', its 'electoral and referendum campaigns

of the party became increasingly marked by a populist style and resentful rhetoric' (Mazzoleni and Skenderovic, 2007:93). That corresponds to the political style typically adopted by populist movements, in which they are keen to use 'agitation, spectacular acts, exaggeration, calculated provocations', and to breach 'political and socio-cultural taboos' (Heinisch, 2003: 94; Taggart, 2000 in Mazzoleni and Skenderovic, 2007:93).

The transformation of SVP into a party, which prioritises the nation above all else, might be seen as an outcome of the referendum tactics of the party. For Georgiadou (2008) these initiatives offer the ability to mobilise the elements within the electorate towards a different direction from the one of the rest of the parties participating in the government coalition. Moreover, this would allow the party to project its anti-immigration, anti-European and anti-international positions (2008:402). For Skenderovic (2007), direct democracy tactics like referendums offer SVP the opportunity, while participating in coalition governments, to promote federal initiatives in order to express their anti-establishment anti-immigration sentiments and 'to reinforce its credibility as a popular voice that takes the people's grievances and worries about immigration issues seriously' (2007:172). In this, the party was able to set and make policies on issues related to immigration and to exert pressure on government policy regarding immigration. Referendum tactics and anti-immigration policies are thus the most salient signifiers of the party's communication strategies while offer a vital contribution to the party's success.

Following SVP's calls for a referendum in 1992, the Swiss electorate rejected, by 53,6%, the initiative against the illegal immigration, which aimed to bring in stricter laws on political asylum (Altermatt and Skenderovic, 1999:103); and did so again a decade later, on the referendum against the restricting of the asylum system with the majority of the people rejecting the proposal by 50,1% (Geden, 2006:103; Skenderovic, 2009:135-137). Similarly, a proposal for the granting of naturalisation was rejected, with a result of 51,6% for the proposal against the granting of nationality to third generation immigrants and a 56,8% to second generation immigrants (Geden, 2006:103; Skenderovic, 2009:135-137). Another example is that on signing the Schengen agreement in 2005, where 54,6% of the voters were in favour of a 'Europe without frontiers' (2005) and the one in 2002 about joining the UN, where 'yes'

gathered 54,6% of the vote (Skenderovic, 2009:135-137). Having said that, the party's same policies on immigration are those that remain in place today. Based on the findings of GfS Research Company, SVP is recognised by 58% of the population as the most efficient party when it comes to immigration policies and by 69% on policies concerning asylum seekers and refugees (gfsbern, 2013).

Nevertheless, one of the most important successes of the party was the initiative against the participation of Switzerland in the European Economic Area in 1992. Standing in opposition to every other party participating in the Bundesrat along with elements from several trade unions and the media, the party succeeded in winning 50,3% of the votes (Geden, 2006:133-134; Skenderovic, 2009:135-137). For many, the success of the party is attributed, to a great extent, to Blocher himself, who has proved to be a 'demagogue' who 'likes polarising' (Scharsach, 2002:140-141 in Georgiadou, 2008:403). He has 'unrivalled media skills, highly effective organizational skills and a deep pocket' (Church, 2000:217). For Church (2000), along with Blocher's personality, official policies together with the party's approach of having direct contact with the electorate have facilitated SVP's transformation into a powerful player on the political scene, in general, and in coalition governments in particular (2000:216-217).

The rhetoric adopted in the last decade proved to be a successful formula for the party, which along with its populist communication and choice of political agenda have contributed to the party's electoral success. Stockemer (2012), however, examines the electoral success of SVP in terms of the electoral support of the party and the nature of its voters. Based on his analysis, the characteristics of SVP voters have hardly changed over fifteen years, with the exception that men appear keener on voting for the party than women. In 2007, compared to 1995, the typical SVP supporter had the same characteristics: traditional conservative views, low level of education and had 'been socialised into a right-wing milieu' (Stockemer, 2012) with a tendency to combine an economically rightist outlook with strong social conservatism (Germann, Mendez, Serdult and Wheatley, 2012:19). Skenderovic (2013) adds to this profile of the voter by underlining that traditional SVP voters come from rural regions, from the old middle class, and are often self-employed workers. Lately however, SVP has gained supporters from voters in lower and middle-income groups, and those with lower or average levels of formal education (Skenderovic, 2013).

The views of the party appear to have resonated with a significant portion of the population, the majority of which considers it as the most appropriate vehicle for addressing the major problems of the country on environmental issues, unemployment, economic growth, in addition to immigration and asylum (gsfbern.ch, 2013). For Stockemer (2012), the fact that the party managed to attract part of the electorate originated from dissimilar ideological backgrounds. He explains the increase in the party's vote in terms of two major factors: the identity politics that distinguishes the party from all other Swiss parties and its organisational capacity which will be analysed in further detail below.

Skenderovic (2009) has underlined that one of the other reasons explaining SVP's success can be understood by the growing dissatisfaction towards the country's consensual system. Nevertheless, SVP has without a doubt become a long-term political force in the Swiss political arena by gaining instant representation in the national parliament and by participating in coalition governments at municipal, cantonal and national level.

5.3. Structure and Ideology

As in the case of LA.O.S. (see Chapter 4), the structure and the ideology of the party are indispensable elements when constructing the party's identity. At first sight, SVP demonstrates most of the elements that are seen as constituting a radical right party in Western Europe and this will now be examined further in light of the conceptualisation of political communication discussed in Chapter 2.

5.3.1. Structure

An overview of the party's structure can be found in its official website (svp.ch), where we are also introduced to its official policies and its organisational structure. The website also provides its manifesto and various other official party documents via a rich archive. According to the party, the structure of SVP corresponds to the federal structure of the country itself; Switzerland has three political levels: the Confederation (federal), cantons and municipalities. Accordingly, SVP also has a national (Swiss)

party, as a 'roof' over the so-called cantonal parties (SVP, 2013). Based on the party's official records, SVP has over 90,000 members throughout Switzerland. Trying to create its own member profile, the party provides information according to which about one-fifth of its membership comes from agriculture and forestry, another fifth from the professions (business, medicine, law, etc.) and the remaining three-fifths can be found among workers, civil servants, and teachers (SVP, 2013). By having members from these backgrounds allows SVP to identify itself as a genuine and modern 'People's Party' (SVP, 2013), which is represented in all four-language regions of Switzerland.

5.3.2. Leadership

The party leader is the most powerful official within a party, as s/he is responsible for the party's relationship with the electorate and the general public, apart from being the party's public face and main contact with the media. In radical right parties, charismatic leadership is one of the major characteristics which lead to their success. The SVP is no exception although there are other strong party members who appear to play an important role like the party's spokesmen.

Ueli Maurer was the party's president from 1996-2008. Before that he was a member of the cantonal parliament of Zurich from 1983-1991 and in 1996, at Blocher's suggestion, he was elected president of the SVP (Skenderovic, 2009:134). Under his leadership, SVP became one of the strongest political parties on the Swiss political scene and established its place at a national level. Since 2008 the chairman of the party is Toni Brunner. But it is Blocher who contributed most to the transformation of the party. As a public figure, directly linked to the party, Blocher's personality became, for Skenderovic (2009), a powerful symbol and a motivation for people to vote for the party.

A politician, an industrialist and a member of the Swiss Federal Council and the Federal Department of Justice and police from 2004 to 2007, Blocher serves as Vice President of the SVP and his contribution to the success of SVP since the first decade of the twenty-first century is well acknowledged. In his political career, Blocher had been a member of *Nationalrat* (1979-2003), president of SVP in Zurich (1977-2003),

and president of the AUNS (Campaign for an Independent and Neutral Switzerland) (Blocher, 2013).

For Georgiadou (2008), more than ‘demagogue and populist’, more than a ‘media personality’, Blocher is a successful businessman who knows the techniques of administration and organisation and how to market a product and make it available to consumers (2008:408). By recognising the gaps in the commercial market, the deficit in political confrontation, the accumulation of feelings of discontent and protest, Blocher sought to attract votes by means of an aggressive campaign style. Blocher appeared as a populist leader, successful in ‘mobilising support in election and voting campaigns and in skilfully demonstrating what it takes to build a mass, following in an era where media have become an important vehicle for winning voter support’ (Skenderovic, 2009, 139-140). In his personal website, launched in 1996, the visitor has access to Blocher’s political programme, personal speeches and numerous interviews and articles. For Canovan (1999), what marks politicians like Blocher populists is not only that they employ simple direct language in the way they address political issues, but that they offer ‘political analyses and proposed solutions that are also simple and direct (1999:5). By understanding the potential offered by a more strategic use of communication in order to influence the public (see Swanson & Nimmo, 1990), Blocher managed to employ simple and direct language while addressing political issues, as well as offering solutions, which could be understood easily. It is under the strong influence of Blocher that SVP saw its numbers grow; his presence in the party leadership played a key role in the selection and development of communication strategies for the party.

Along with a new organisational structure, charismatic leadership and improvements in political campaigning and public relations, SVP changed its way of addressing the electorate. Before going into more depth about the communication skills of the party, the context of the electoral manifestos will be discussed.

5.3.3 Ideology – Policy making

This research draws together the following documents in order to depict the ideology of the party. The political party manifesto programme as adopted in 1999,

with the statutes of the party (the most official document), gives a comprehensive description of the image and identity that SVP likes to project. Consideration of the manifesto of 2007 develops this even further. Apart from this, in the official website of the party there are official announcements, official speeches and press releases, which reflect the positions of the party on various issues covering a wide range of topics such as politics, economy, environment etc. Such a very well structured source of information offered on the website creates a very user-friendly environment. In its official website, SVP provides its own analytical image of what the party stands for, in terms of its positions and policies. There are links to an extensive archive covering the period from 2003 until the present where all official position papers, slogans, press releases, annual reports, interviews and brief overviews of the positions are made available; as are the party's newspaper, speeches and press releases. Although for the purposes of this research the focus remains on analysing the electoral manifestos and selected speeches by the leader, the rich material offered on the website is worth highlighting, especially in comparison to the cases of LA.O.S. and AN.

Concerning its ideology, the party claims to adhere to the values of 'national conservatism', aiming at the preservation of Switzerland's political sovereignty and a conservative society (SVP, 2013). In the 1990s SVP, as mentioned above, transferred its focus on social issues, national and international security, globalisation, immigration and cultural pluralism. These issues are going to be the signifiers of the party's rhetoric and can be traced through several aspects of SVP's communication tactics, e.g. electoral campaigns and speeches. Having Blocher on the front line, the party managed to connect fear of foreigners with social insecurities concerning unemployment, taxation, bureaucracy and economic welfare (Georgiadou, 2008:406). For Betz (2005), it is this connection between such national-cultural fear and social-economic insecurity, or else, these 'fusion materials and cultural concerns' that SVP was aiming at (2005:164).

Adopting a more national chauvinistic approach towards how the country should be governed, the party manifesto of 2007 starts and concludes with the Swiss flag along with the phrase of 'my country-our Switzerland' (SVP, 2007). This suggests that the party primarily adapts its rhetoric to right-wing conservative voters, who are part of the target electorate for the radical right. Additionally, according to Betz (2005), the

party is flattering the hard-working middle class, sharing the indignation of the electorate by stressing that there is a need for ‘unjust punishment’ towards taxation policies, and projects liberal policies promoting the principle of individual responsibility. It is also sceptical about any expansion of governmental services (2005:165-166). In an environment where the potential voter feels insecure, and is motivated by the ‘principle of neutrality’ and the conservative values of a traditional society, the party offers an alternative that promises the preservation of both Swiss national identity and the system. This will be achieved by the rejection of the policy, which seeks the accession of Switzerland to the European Union, the rejection of military involvement abroad, the protection of homeland security and the rejection of increases in government spending on social welfare and education. The party is in favour of increased competition in the market and lower taxes, while it is against deficit budgets. In sum, the underlying principles of the party can be found in the official statement of the party programme of 2003-2007, where SVP defends Swiss exceptionalism

[...] Our freedom and our independence makes us strong...and for this we will defend ourselves...The democratic birthright of the people must become a model to imitate at a national level and in no case to be sacrificed to foreign policy objectives such as joining the EU (SVP, 2013)

Additionally, in the document there is an emphasis on the fact that accession would waste public money, which would lead to an increase in taxation, a subsidising of taxpayers with unnecessary services like ‘promoting a movie, kindergartens and offices for equality’. The party defends the model of the traditional family that ‘owns the care of children from birth until adulthood’ (SVP, 2013).

5.4. Analysing the context

5.4.1. Beyond the text

In this part of the discussion the main focus is to analyse and present the identity of the party and to develop an argument that will support the main hypothesis regarding ideology and communication politics. In the party manifesto, released just before the elections of 1999 and which was the official party line for several years,

SVP introduced its new image. The years that followed marked a significant increase in SVP popularity. The issues that occupied the agenda of 1999 are the same that SVP continues to follow to this day. This political agenda can be characterised as typical of a radical right party, equivalent to those of other parties with similar ideology around Europe. Major issues addressed are asylum and security, immigration and welfare chauvinism, issues that have been developed and adjusted to the party's programme and rhetoric and which have come to characterise the party as a whole. Above all, SVP stressed its commitment towards the electorate and its members by identifying as a party on which 'people can rely' since the party is committed to keeping its promises (SVP, 2007). Along with the ideas and policies presented in the party manifestos, wider information is communicated through images containing the Swiss flag, countryside landscapes, photos from party events and public speeches, images that encapsulate the idea of what SVP stands for.

Within the first few pages of every manifesto from 1999 until the latest party programme of 2011, the party introduces its principal values and positions according to which the party builds up its programme and claims its place in the political spectrum. The aim of the party is to give the impression of placing the citizen at the centre of its concerns. The desire for liberty, independence and personal responsibility is seen as having formed the bedrock of the Confederation from its very beginning. According to the party, these are the values that have made the country strong and shaped it for centuries, as they guarantee prosperity and security. 'The economic crises and budget deficits so characteristic of the modern era demonstrate the superiority of Switzerland's recipe for success ,but these achievements are under threat; the actions of the Federal Council, parliament and the administration are increasingly challenging the fundamental values and strengths of our country' (SVP, 2007); nonetheless, the party stands for a 'secure future in freedom and prosperity' in a country that 'is worth living in and of which someone can be proud' and work for the conservation of Switzerland's unique system that was founded on 'sovereignty, direct democracy, permanent neutrality, federalism and subsidiarity' (SVP, 2013).

Ideas on the state and its evolution

When it comes to financial and tax policies, they determine all the other tasks of the state. 'The state needs money to perform the tasks entrusted it with. However, people

have a right to expect that the taxes, levies and fees they pay are used efficiently and responsibly' (SVP, 2013).

SVP finds Switzerland's financial policy situation remains unsatisfactory and despite all the savings and relief programmes, the state's budget continues to grow. And the explanation lies in the fact that

[f]ederal government has neither an effective list of financial policy priorities nor a strategic objective, let alone an effective plan for reining in unnecessary expenditure (SVP, 2007)

In addition, the party promises to work to guarantee the 'protection of the private property and privacy' and promote tighter control of the national budget along with lower taxes and a more neo-liberal economic approach to the market with less bureaucracy (SVP, 2013). It will also place emphasis 'on securing jobs in many areas, while retaining an open foreign policy which at the same time rejects membership of the EU, EEA or NATO' (SVP, 2013) in any form. In terms of crime, SVP will demand 'tougher penalties on lawbreakers and ask for deportation of foreign criminals' (SVP, 2013). On the major issue of immigration and asylum policy, the party asks for a 'consistent asylum policy that prevents abuse and offers protection' and an immigration policy 'tailored to the needs of the country' itself with the army used as the national defence system (SVP, 2013).

Moreover, the party welcomes a productive agricultural sector with 'family-run farms', a social welfare system protected from any kind of 'abuse', and an education system that 'expects and encourages performances' and emphasises the personal responsibility of the individual (SVP, 2013). The party wants a 'safe, cheap and independent energy supply', realistic action for the security of the environment and a media policy based on competition (SVP, 2013). Finally, SVP supports a vibrant culture characterised by a sense of community, the fundamental values of Western Christian culture (SVP, 2013). For SVP, the state is responsible for creating and developing a healthy economic environment for its citizens and, additionally, for creating circumstances essential for minimising unemployment levels.

Another important tenet for the party is preserving the Swiss currency, gold and tax sovereignty. Tax competition between cantons and municipalities has made a substantial contribution to the prosperity of the country. For SVP creeping internationalisation, bureaucratisation, centralisation and harmonisation are a threat to direct democracy and the gradual process of disenfranchisement is being carried out under the seemingly attractive mantra of ‘increased efficiency’ (SVP, 2007). For this reason SVP demands that all politicians and judges act resolutely to defend the Swiss legal system. The federal government, by contrast, according to the party, increasingly adopts prescriptions laid down by international organisations, the cantons do what the federal government tells them, and the municipalities take their orders from the cantons. Similarly, public servants at all levels have less power to influence matters (SVP, 2007). Additionally, SVP’s approach to businesses and enterprises encompasses the

[...]support for a wide range of enterprises from large to medium-sized and small, considering them the foundation of the country’s prosperity. It advocates the reduction of expensive bureaucracy and the enforcement of the legal system as it is rather than new prohibitions; it is also against the state competing with private enterprises or obstructing them (SVP, 2007)

SVP supports the abolition of the right of appeal for associations and calls for a simplification of value added tax and a reduction in the profits tax on companies in the direct federal tax. Finally, it states it is against the burden placed on smaller companies to gather statistics as well as the self-serving collaboration ‘of left-wing pseudo-companies’, while supporting the client confidentiality of Swiss bank and the whole Swiss financial centre (SVP, 2007). Furthermore, it calls for an ‘effective stock corporation law’ to protect property against managerial excesses and advocates a special value added tax rate for the hotel and catering industry (SVP, 2007).

The threat of immigration

As previously mentioned, developing policies which focus on asylum seekers and foreigners in general is an area of major importance for SVP, especially in the last two decades. Since Switzerland is seen as a country with a high risk of accepting too many immigrants (20% of the population are foreigners) (SVP, 1999), SVP wants consistent asylum and immigration policies to limit this influx in order to ensure social

peace, which could become endangered. Their argument is based on the notion that the future of the Swiss people will be threatened by increasing numbers of immigrants, to the extent that 'in a small period of time we are going to become strangers in our own country' (SVP, 1999).

According to SVP it is because Switzerland provides a high standard of living and a generous social benefits sector that makes the country attractive to mass immigration. But it is the *abuse* of hospitality that creates xenophobia and this is the reason that xenophobia and racism need to be effectively countered (SVP, 1999). For the party, asylum for genuine refugees, people whose lives are demonstrably threatened, and therefore seek protection, should be granted in Switzerland. However, as Switzerland is regarded as a rich country with unlimited possibilities many illegal immigrants who do not fulfil these requirements are trying to claim asylum. In order to prevent this from appening, SVP proposes more effective border protection and efficient laws that will shorten the procedures (SVP 1999, 2007).

The party declares that Switzerland is 'not a country of immigration', and argues that the Swiss Plateau is already one of the world's most densely populated regions. Because of the policies of the Federal Council and the centre-left parties, SVP claims that the country has been exposed to uncontrolled population growth with far-reaching consequences, and because of that important qualities and traditions of the nation are at risk. According to the party 'this situation is the consequence of uncontrolled mass immigration' and that is why SVP launched its deportation initiative: 'foreigners who commit murder, rape or robbery or who abuse our social welfare system must leave our country' (SVP, 2007). The party condemns the so-alled 'asylum industry' by stating that three quarters of the people asking for asylum are doing so only in order to take advantage of this generous welfare provision, and stresses that the majority of the people in prison are from other countries and thus contribute to raising crime levels (SVP, 2007).

The party makes a connection between criminal attitudes and the origin of the immigrants, especially those coming from Muslim countries, and underlines the incompatibility between Christianity and Islam. Along with this argument SVP challenges the capability and willingness of these people to integrate since 60% of

them come from countries that are not culturally compatible with Switzerland (SVP, 2013). As Betz (2005) sees it, in some election material in 2003, Islam was openly named as the basic obstacle for the integration of immigrants, since it is a 'factor that could be applied in order to destroy Western Christian culture' (2005:160).

Nevertheless, integration is a cornerstone of any sensible immigration policy and 'is not only the responsibility of the host country but it is also the responsibility of the immigrants themselves' (SVP, 1999). It should be based on the willingness of those immigrating to settle in the host country, as well as on the local population interacting with incomers on the basis of honesty and a sharing of information on both sides. The SVP encourages the naturalisation and integration of a number of foreigners and to facilitate this, SVP launched an initiative aimed at fighting asylum abuse and reducing the attractiveness of Switzerland for asylum seekers; it also calls for effective implementation of asylum decisions and effective measures to stabilise the total foreign population (SVP, 2007). Finally, it asks for a revision of the criminal law against racism. Continuing its argument on the issue of immigration, the party wants the dual nationality and immigration background to be recorded in the official federal crime statistics. As long as danger of an increase in the number of immigrants remains, the party asks for consistent application of asylum law, and demands that 'asylum seekers from countries where there is no risk of persecution be sent back immediately – if necessary by compulsory deportation' (SVP, 2007). It considers it unacceptable that municipalities should be forced to pick up the bill for sloppy asylum procedures at a federal level, and the party believes that it is untenable for social security payments to be made to people whose removal has been declared legally enforceable.

The party calls for the 'reintroduction of quotas for immigration and for parliament to be given the power to decide on their application' (SVP, 1999, 2007). It also opposes any further easing of the requirements for naturalisation and demands that those wishing to acquire Swiss citizenship pay an appropriate amount in order to do so. SVP advocates probationary naturalisation, and that citizenship should be withdrawn from those who commit crimes. Similarly, it opposes the naturalisation of any applicants who do not have a residence permit, have a criminal background or lack the ability to speak, read and write in an official language. Citizenship should be withdrawn from persons with dual nationality that are guilty of serious offences. . If

Swiss citizenship is granted to asylum seekers it must include a formal declaration of loyalty to the Swiss law and the Constitution. Furthermore it is opposed to granting any voting rights to foreigners and demands strict and consistent application of the law on foreigners in connection with those who are in Switzerland illegally or have no identification papers. Finally it does not accept the legalisation of those who are in the country illegally and without papers and calls for a strengthening of the border police to prevent illegal immigrants from entering the country (SVP, 2007).

Law and order applications

Moreover, the party considers that the proportion of crimes that are actually solved is lamentably low, because many are not even reported and the risk of prosecution is constantly decreasing. Along with that, the Swiss economy has long depended on foreign workers and the country has therefore always offered a generous, but controlled, welcome to the immigrants that have contributed to the growth and, in return, enjoyed a life of relative prosperity in Switzerland. But the population of Switzerland is currently ‘exploding’ (SVP, 2007). As pointed out by Skenderovic (2007), from the 1990s the agenda adopted by SVP regarding immigration and asylum policies was displayed along with the party rhetoric in its campaigns where the issue of asylum seekers was presented in terms which referred to asylum-seekers as the source of the numerous problems in Swiss society.

Having this in mind, SVP calls for the reintroduction of suspended and non-suspended sentences even for periods of less than six months and demands the abolition of suspended fines and so-called reparations and the reintroduction of fines for misdemeanours and crimes (SVP, 2007). In the meantime the party demands the compulsory confinement of criminals, and especially serial criminal, in appropriate closed institutions and wants judges to be able to apply the maximum penalty for adults from the age of sixteen for serious crimes such as rape, grievous bodily harm, or murder. As for young offenders, they are to be automatically reported to their teachers and instructors, with details of the offence they have committed (SVP, 2007). Security is a very important issue for the party, and is linked to the most popular theme of the agenda: the immigrants. Reports of beatings, stabbings, rapes and murders, theft, burglary and threatening behaviour by immigrants are seen as ‘increasing [*sic.* and] endangering the safety of the population at large’ (SVP, 2007).

Additionally, the Swiss legal system is increasingly being amended so that it complies line with EU and international law. Yet, EU law and international law are made not by the people, but by civil servants, experts, professors and politicians. For SVP, Switzerland adopts numerous EU regulations where there is no need to do so, and the European Convention on Human Rights too, goes far beyond binding international law and threatens the liberties on which the Swiss state is founded (SVP, 2007). Finally, instead of granting citizens the freedom to make their own judgments, the public authorities increasingly act as their moral guardians. The moralising opinions increasingly voiced by the Federal Council are questionable and unacceptable. 'Democracy is a form of state that offers alternatives. There must always be scope for a yes or a no answer, without advocates of the one or the other view being shouted down or even dismissed as morally inferior. It is equally undemocratic when the Federal Council or parliament bundles popular vote proposals together with the express intention of frustrating the will of the people' (SVP, 2007).

International relations and EU

When it comes to the EU, SVP identifies Switzerland as closely linked with all European countries culturally and politically, and that the country has an important role in Europe, both geographically and economically. For SVP Switzerland is a country which can be held up as a model of democracy, environmental protection, social security and economic performance. This is seen as the incentive behind Europe's keen interest in joining with this important and financially strong trading partner. Joining the EU though is not one of the interests of SVP although it welcomes Switzerland's cooperation with the EU in the form of balanced bilateral agreements (SVP, 1999, 2007). For SVP a possible accession would be equal to the elimination of elements that characterise the Swiss culture, e.g. direct democracy, independence and neutrality and would possibly cause serious problems, e.g. rising unemployment and increasing of taxes (SVP, 2007). The official line of SVP concerning international relations with the EU is withdrawal from any discussion on the issue of free movement of people across the borders.

SVP recognises that joining the EU could help Switzerland's cooperation with Europe in different areas, like easier reciprocal market access and improved

information exchange, which might open new possibilities. More specifically, advantages could be had for the 'exportation sector by reducing customs formalities, and EU membership might provide some transnational procedures for example in helping the fight against organised crime', but nevertheless the potential accession to the EU could destroy Swiss independence (SVP, 2007). Switzerland then would be called to support the troubled economy of the Eurozone something that would only harm the country. Additionally it would make it easier to abuse asylum procedures. SVP favours an open attitude towards all states and suggests that there will be a way for better mutual collaboration: 'The party is now demanding a thorough testing of bilateral contracts with the EU, rejects EU membership and calls for the withdrawal of the EU membership application and a departure from this strategic goal in favour of broad discussion on cooperation' (SVP, 1999).

The role of education

With regard to education, SVP believes that it is one of the most important reserves of the country. Professional knowledge can define the performance of the country itself (SVP, 1999) and can also contribute to the protection of values and virtues and be an investment for the future. For SVP the quality of education in public schools has deteriorated. The teaching of traditional values and virtues, such as reliability, discipline and respect, is frowned upon and also the work of the teaching staff has become difficult.

Another particular problem that has been presented by the party in recent years is the growing number of foreign children in schools, creating a situation that requires the preparation of extra language courses and measures in order to facilitate the integration of these new students. At the same time, an important component of basic education in multilingual Switzerland is the teaching of national languages. Only in this will the multilingualism of Switzerland be used as an advantage. Effective education in the mother language and another national language as a second language are indispensable for progress (SVP, 1999). Better school qualifications and higher education in particular are enjoying increasing popularity and education and research for the future of Switzerland should be rewarding (SVP, 1999). Bearing this in mind the party promises to create a generous environment in which investment in research and formulation of new opportunities is paramount. In sum, SVP calls for a performance-

based education system in which the performance of the young requires more collaboration between university and private sector and a closer link between practice and research. Finally, SVP wants attractive, future-oriented vocational training and calls for linguistic skills to be adjusted through the enrolment of foreign students in special classes.

As far as matters relating to the family, and parental responsibility for bringing up children are concerned, the SVP increasingly questions whether the state is making ever-greater incursions into the parental sphere. The party suggests that children are already supposed to begin compulsory schooling at the age of just four, and if the educational bureaucrats have their way, they will be integrated into state care even earlier (SVP, 2007). Finally, for SVP, politicians and trade unionists are overloading the social welfare system, but every Swiss citizen has to pick up the bill. In relation to that, more and more foreigners who come in the country end up not in the labour market but in the social welfare system. And since the system can only be maintained if those who pay can rest assured that they are not being defrauded, 'abuse of the system needs to be systematically rooted out'.

The Personal initiative

For SVP the most important thing and the actual bedrock for the country and nation are the people, who represent supreme authority in the state, and they alone should decide which direction it will follow. The party believes that the way to self-determination and self-confidence is if the nation is represented in a liberal state with comprehensive freedoms and citizens' rights, a neutral foreign policy and a federal political order. Based on this, 'SVP is committed to an independent Switzerland that is open to the world: one that maintains good political, economic and cultural relations with all nations but at the same time protects its own sovereignty and makes its own decisions' (SVP, 2007). The bond, according to the party, is a patriotism that is not tied to a single culture or language but rather to a shared history and a commitment to a unique political system without which the Swiss multicultural nation could not enjoy the freedoms that people cherish today; SVP believes that the Swiss are united by commitment to a system based on independence, federalism, direct democracy, permanent armed neutrality. For this reason there should be a 'commitment to Switzerland's unique system as, despite adverse external conditions, it has brought us

almost two centuries of peace, stability, security and prosperity and in the option of abandoning the commitment to that uniqueness' and to 'give up one or more of the pillars on which the state is built, people risk endangering the quality of Switzerland as a whole' (SVP, 2007).

Values and Traditions

The best choice from the perspective of SVP is to focus on values depicting both strength and traditional culture, such as modesty, and hard work, which have traditionally characterised the Swiss people. 'There are scarcely any examples to follow, since few countries have begun tackling the difficulties that we too face: national indebtedness, weak growth, unemployment, a ballooning social welfare system, poor education, crime and mass immigration' (SVP, 2007). For SVP only federalism gives citizens the highest possible degree of democratic co-determination within a manageable framework. 'The closer to the people the decisions are taken, the more efficient and sensible is the use made of public funds. The smaller the political unit, the more prudently it manages its resources' (SVP, 2007).

Environment

As seen in the manifestos, the safeguarding of resources is also a major issue in SVP policy. Sustainable development in Switzerland is an important concern and for this reason Switzerland in the field of environmental protection is already leading the world as a role model. This favoured model is based on research in the field of the rational use of energy and fuel, and urges favourable conditions for energy production and procurement for Switzerland and is committed to the protection of nature for future generations. The party stands in favour of measures for the efficient use of all alternative energies, says 'yes to continue to use nuclear energy and supports the maintenance and renewal of existing as well as the moderate, environmentally compatible construction of new water supplies' (SVP, 1999).

Thoughts on the federal system and the nation above all

SVP wants to see a decisive step taken towards full democracy at federal level, through popular elections to the Federal Council. 'As is the case in most cantonal governments and municipal councils, these elections should be conducted via a majority voting system, guaranteeing at least two seats for the non-German-speaking

regions of Switzerland' (SVP, 2007). In this case, unlike parliament, the people will elect their government without self-serving, petty-minded scheming, party-political intrigues and agreements reached in smoke-filled rooms. Moreover, the media have less influence on the citizenry than they do on parliamentarians; this would ensure that federal councillors rather than interests, who serve popular decisions, would better represent the people's interests.

On the other hand, SVP suggests that political decisions should be taken as close to the citizenry as possible. As the municipality is the smallest political unit and is closest to the people, decisions on matters of local concern should be taken at municipal level wherever possible. The courts must not go beyond the principles of the Constitution and curtail the rights of the citizens. 'SVP cannot accept the increasing restrictions on democratic rights or the growing trend for the judiciary to place itself above the democratic process. Municipalities should therefore be allowed to take final decisions for themselves regarding the form of naturalisation procedures' (SVP, 2007).

To sum up, in relation to the sovereignty of the Swiss people, SVP stands opposed to the marginalisation of the community through globalisation; demands that elected authorities defend the legal system rather than applying foreign laws; requests that EU law should not be automatically implemented when this is not in Switzerland's interest; disputes the tendency towards centralisation and the expansion of the responsibility of the federal government; supports communal authorities and municipal assemblies; rejects mergers of municipalities and cantons; defends the democratic rights of the population and opposes the tendency of the courts to place themselves beyond democracy; trusts that the Federal Council should be elected by the people and demands the reinforcement of freedom of expression (SVP, 2007).

For SVP, Swiss nationality is highly prized around the world and the Swiss passport offers protection and many advantages. Citizenship confers unique rights and liberties. For this reason, 'naturalisation can never be anything but the final step on the path to integration. Citizenship is not a fundamental right but a political right' (SVP, 2007). SVP therefore believes that there should be no automatic entitlement to the granting of citizenship, or automatic appeal to the courts if applications for citizenship are rejected. Measures should be taken to ensure that naturalisations remain at a

reasonable. Above all, for SVP, acquisition of Swiss citizenship should come at a price.

In relation to the state and the position of the country in the international political scene, SVP believes that the goal of Swiss foreign policy is set down in Article 2 of the Federal Constitution: ‘The Swiss Confederation shall protect the liberty and rights of the people and safe-guard the independence and security of the country’ (SVP, 2007).

[T]he people are sovereign and determine the fate and future of Switzerland in freedom and independence. Their freedom of action is limited only by binding international law. The Swiss people and their elected representatives oversee the exercise of foreign policy by the Federal Council. The Federal Council and federal parliamentarians undertake, by their oath or vow, to uphold the Constitution and the law (SVP, 2007)

The Constitution charges the Federal Council and parliament with taking ‘measures to safeguard the external security, independence and neutrality of Switzerland’ (SVP, 2007). The same applies to treaties that impose unreasonable disadvantages on Switzerland. The Swiss Penal Code states that any person who, as the authorised representative of the Confederation, conducts negotiations with a foreign government, which are intended to be detrimental to the Confederation, shall be liable to a custodial sentence of not less than one year (SVP, 2007).

Based on these principles the party demands, as the ultimate goals of foreign policy, the preservation of liberty, citizens’ rights, independence and the neutrality of Switzerland. It is opposed to all efforts to join the UN Security Council, and calls for the withdrawal of the application to join the EU and the dismantling of the integration office.

5.4.2. Organised campaigns

The logo of SVP is a smiling sun rising from a green landscape ‘holding’ a Swiss flag. The logo is accompanied with the slogan: ‘Swiss quality, the party of the middle class’. The colours that predominate in the logo are green red white and yellow. The red and white reflect the national colours of Switzerland. Green also reflects the

landscapes of the country and the sun and signifies the new start that the party represents. Green appears as the most popular colour from among these four, as it is used as a background in the official website of the party as well. The logo itself creates positive sentiments as green above all represents harmony and balance, and is thought to represent life and growth, especially in the company of a glowing sun. As the sun rises above the green field, the new Switzerland will rise from the ideals and propositions of the party.



Figure 5:2 The logo of SVP

Apart from policies and ideology that identify the party, one of the main factors that distinguish SVP from the rest of Swiss parties is its campaigning and communication choices. During the past few years the party has run a recognisable campaign concerning anti-immigration policies. One of these was in 2007 where the party was criticised for its posters representing three white sheep kicking a black sheep out of the country. Similar to the idea of the idiom to describe a disreputable member of a group or a family, the so-called ‘black sheep’ campaign, was reflecting the SVP’s policy of expelling the foreigner criminals. The initial reaction towards the posters was an argument claiming that the posters were aiming to provoke racist and hatred sentiments. Just before the general election the campaign poster was released and created numerous reactions both in the country and at an international level. These posters attracted the condemnation of several associations such as the national anti-racist commission and the Swiss Jewish community and even the United Nations.

Apart from official reactions from politicians and national organisations, but also draw the attention of the press and the publicity on the issue was significant. In order to understand the impact of the campaigns of SVP, it is useful to look at the

newspapers of the time. The Guardian reported the party as supporting a ‘oppressive deportation scheme that allegedly mirrors a law operated by Nazi Germany’ (theGuardian, 2007). At the same time the Swiss President, Micheline Calmy-Rey, characterised the poster as racist and appalling.



Figure 5:3 The black sheep campaign poster

The poster was followed by different slogans, e.g. ‘Make things safer; or ‘For more security’ and was displayed on billboards, in newspapers and, was posted by party members across the country.

At the same time, a campaign video presenting ‘young hooded foreigners committing violent crimes’ was withdrawn after the ‘Swiss youngsters who actually took part complained they had been told they were taking part in a crime-prevention video’ (Sciolino, 2007 in NYT). In this video, entitled ‘Heaven or Hell’ young men are presented sing drugs, smuggling, bullying and harassing women. The video continues by focusing on a combination of people of Muslim background living in Switzerland (women in head scarves, or men sitting around without working). The video ends by showing people going to work during rush hour alongside images depicting logos of Switzerland’s multinational corporations, harvesting on farms, experiments in laboratories, scenes of lakes, mountains, churches and goats. ‘The choice is clear: my home, our security,’ the film states (Sciolino, 2007 in NYT). A court ordering for the party to withdraw the video followed its release.

The black sheep campaign was used as an alert for foreigners that have been convicted of violent crimes. The party required 100.000 signatures in order to bring the

issue to parliament as a potential referendum topic. The poster, which was followed by a storm of criticism, turned into a nationwide debate over the place of immigrants in the country.

National and international media dedicated several pages to the analysis of this political campaign and hosted discussions on the issue. A few days after the display of the poster, the BBC presented reaction by Swiss Jewish groups who stated that the symbolism of the poster, and its use of colour, was frighteningly reminiscent of Nazi propaganda. 'I think it's a disgusting way to conduct politics,' said Alfred Donath, president of the Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities. 'It is entirely contrary to Switzerland's humanitarian tradition, and really not the way we should do things' (Foulkes, 2007 in BBC).

Meanwhile, in the Daily Mail it was reported that the United Nations special rapporteur on racial discrimination, Doudou Diene from Senegal, had requested the Swiss government to provide an official explanation for the campaign (Daily Mail, 2007). The reaction from SVP was instant, as the spokesman Matthias Mueller replied to Doudou Diene's statements by arguing that 'The UN should not be meddling in internal Swiss politics [...] We have got freedom of speech in our country; obviously [Mr Diene] has not understood our culture of democracy. I would suggest he reads up on it' (Foulkes, 2007 in BBC). The poster is, according to the United Nations, 'a sinister symbol of the rise of a new racism and xenophobia in a country where one in four, like the black sheep in the poster, are now foreign immigrants to this peaceful, prosperous and stable country with low unemployment and a per capita GDP larger than that of other Western economies' (Daily Mail, 2007).

Similarly, in the New York Times Micheline Calmy-Rey, the president of Switzerland at the time, stated in an interview that 'The poster is disgusting, unacceptable and stigmatises others plays on the fear factor, and in that sense it's dangerous. The campaign does not correspond to Switzerland's multicultural openness to the world. And I am asking all Swiss who do not agree with its message to have the courage to speak out' (Sciolino, 2007 in NYT). In the same article, interior Minister Pascal Couchepin of the Liberal Democratic Party has proposed that SVP's 'worship of Christoph Blocher, the billionaire who is the party's driving force and the current

justice minister, is reminiscent of that of Italian fascists for Mussolini'. Roman Jäggi, spokesman for the SVP, replied to the criticism by describing the poster campaign as 'completely fair'. According to him, 'It is not racist,' and continued that the big problem with violence and foreigner criminals is a big one. Similarly, a SVP official statement was that the campaign was not racist but just targeting on anticrime. In an extended article in the Daily Mail on the 7th of September 2007, Dr Ulrich Schlüer, the person who had designed the poster, supported his argument by saying that: 'in a suburb of Zürich, a group of youths between 14 and 18 recently raped a 13-year-old girl. It turned out that all of them were already under investigation for some previous offence. They were all foreigners from the Balkans or Turkey' (DailyMail, 2007). And he continued: '[t]heir parents said these boys are out of control. We say: that's not acceptable. It's your job to control them and if you can't do that you'll have to leave'. [...] It's a punishment everyone understands' (DailyMail, 2007).

In the past Schlüer had worked in launching a campaign for a referendum to ban the building of Muslim minarets. He continued '... after the war [Iraq, Afghanistan] there was huge influx of people we had a lot of problems with. The abuse of social security is a key problem. It's estimated to cost £750m a year. More than fifty per cent of it is by foreigners. [...] We're not against mosques, but the minaret is not mentioned in the Koran or other important Islamic texts. It just symbolises a place where Islamic law is established' (Daily Mail, 2007).

At the same year, 2007, the *Egerkingen* committee called for a federal initiative against Muslim minarets in the country. The committee was launched by members of SVP and *Eidgenössisch-Demokratische Union* (EDU). Its main argument was that people 'should be able to block unwanted and unusual projects such as the erection of Islamic minarets'. The committee proposed that the building of minarets should be banned for the minaret is seen as a symbol of religious-political claim to power. Finally, after the initiative of SVP, on September 2009, the Swiss people approved the referendum forbidding the construction of minarets.



Figure 5:4: Campaign poster against the construction of minarets

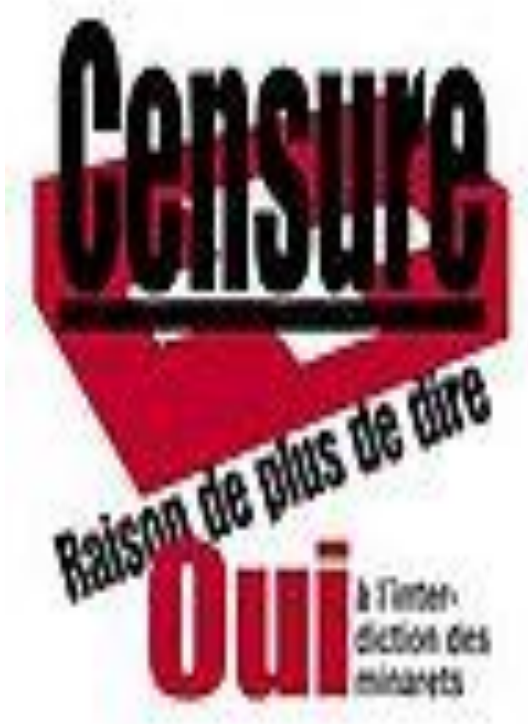


Figure 5:5: Campaign poster against the construction of minarets

During the campaign the SVP , while claiming that the minarets are ‘symbols of political-religious imperialism’ aiming to promote the ‘islamisation of Switzerland’, presented two major posters (Figures 5:4 and 5:5). In the first poster, there are minarets placed on a Swiss flag and a woman is wearing an *abaya* and *niqab*. The text says, ‘Stop’, ‘Yes to the minaret ban’. The minarets resemble

warheads/missiles, reflecting a hostile environment created by the minarets. The instant reaction towards the poster was not positive and several municipalities refused to display it. Due to this refusal of posting the original version and presenting it to the public, the party prepared an additional in which it was stated: ‘Censorship, one more reason to say yes to the minaret ban’. The representation of minarets as weapons prepared and waiting to attack cannot be taken to be other than a well-structured intention to generate fear and motivate a general reaction by the public.

Reactions to the campaign were not all negative. Significantly, several radical right parties across Western Europe e.g. the *Vlaams Blok* in Belgium, the French *Front National* and the *Lega Nord* in Italy welcomed it and considered the SVP’s approach to the ban as a role model which could be applicable in other countries as well. The Wall Street Journal a few days after the referendum reported that ‘...the construction of new minarets is banned, but the building of mosques is unaffected, and the vote does not affect the four existing minarets in the country’, underlining the importance of the respect towards people’s fundamental right to religion (2009). The reaction against the campaign came from the Swiss government and numerous non-governmental organisations across the country. A variety of religious organisations and legal experts also contributed to condemning it. An official statement by the Federal Council as of 28th August 2008, stated that:

[T]he popular initiative against the construction of minarets has been submitted in accordance with the applicable regulations, but infringes guaranteed international human rights and contradicts the core values of the Swiss Federal Constitution. Such a ban would endanger peace between religions and would not help to prevent the spread of fundamentalist Islamic beliefs. [...] the Federal Council therefore recommends that the Swiss parliament reject the initiative without making a counter-proposal (admin.ch, 2013)

The Affairs Committee of State (SPC), in rejecting the Minaret Initiative, made a similar statement on 27th March 2009, saying that ‘the popular initiative is contrary to core fundamental values of Switzerland and violates international law’ and that

[...] the Swiss legal system, regardless of religious affiliation, must be respected fully by people of Islamic faith. This requires no minaret ban. On the contrary, this measure would require the integration of the Muslim population (parlament.ch, 2013)

Numerous SVP members have shown themselves to be critical of Islam by having participated in the minaret controversy, during which they pushed for an initiative to ban the construction of minarets. In November 2009 this ban won a majority vote (57.5%) and became an amendment to the Swiss Constitution (admin.ch, 2013).

In 2008, SVP presented another xenophobic and racist poster displaying hands from different ethnic backgrounds reaching for Swiss passports. SVP argued against the ‘mass-naturalisation’ of immigrants in stating that there should be a referendum about it.. Nevertheless, in the referendum of June 2008 the population rejected the proposition for stricter measures regarding the granting of Swiss citizenship to foreigners (see section 5.2 above). The main proposal of the party was that the citizens of the communes should be the ones to decide such requests for citizenship.



Figure 5:6 Campaign posters against mass-nationalization



Figure 5:7 Anti-immigration campaign poster



Figure 5:8 Anti-immigration campaign poster

Two other election posters presented by SVP reflect the party's anti-immigration policies. One shows legs of men wearing suits marching across the Swiss flag. Both posters were accompanied by slogans reading: 'Open doors for abuse? NO!' and 'Now is enough! Stop mass immigration'. The other shows three crows increasingly surrounding Switzerland and pecking at it. What is common to the majority of such election posters is the usage of the colours: red, white and black. Red represents the Swiss flag as a positive symbolic sign, whereas black underlines the negative message

regarding immigrants, minarets, and criminals. Additionally, the red colour signals an alerting essence to the posters, e.g. stop.

What is considerably different in the case of SVP is the choice of the focus of the campaigns on significant issues like immigration, thus addressing the xenophobic and islamophobic sentiments of the audience rather than choosing the figure of the party's leader, or Blocher himself. The communication tactics of the party in promoting such issues, which have contributed greatly to the party's electoral success, works as a signifier for the party itself.

5.5. Outcomes

As several scholars highlight (see Albertazzi, 2002, Rensmann, 2006), SVP is strongly characterised, a populist party, similar to other parties in the Western Europe, originated in the radical right family, e.g. *Lega Nord* in Italy, or the *Front National* in France. This categorisation as a populist party, according to Betz (2009), has often been associated with the capability of the party to incorporate elements of the rhetoric of the radical right, e.g. ethno-nationalism along with the 'centrality to its mobilisation campaigns under its former leader, Blocher, from the mid-1990s' (2009:99). As stated above, Blocher is considered the 'architect of the party's turn towards populism', and responsible for the party's radicalisation (Albertazzi, 2009:2, Cranmer, 2011:290).

As Mudde (2004) underlines, one of the approaches offered 'to the remaining actors is to exclude the populist actor(s) from political power' and simultaneously to 'include populist themes and rhetoric' (2004:563). The classification of SVP as a populist party for Cranmer (2011) is based on specific core elements and communication of right-wing populist ethno-nationalist sentiments, especially in terms of their centrality to its mobilisation campaigns under the leadership of Blocher from the mid-1990s (2011:290). For Milic and Scheuss (2006) the SVP 'moderated its communication style during the debates on the immigration and asylum amendments' (2006:18). Following Mudde's argument, Cranmer (2011) suggests that the adoption of popular communication strategies by SVP prompted other parties to embrace a more populist communication approach, too, and to use a populist vocabulary, especially in relation to issues about the preservation of Swiss tradition (Cranmer, 2011:290-291).

Over the time, the SVP has managed to attract media attention and to benefit from it. In Udris' (2012) work on *Media attention, issue ownership and party strategies in Switzerland*, it is argued that SVP has managed to dominate the news and the political contest across a wide range of issues included in the radical right agenda, like the issue 'of ownership in highly salient issue fields such as 'identity politics' and 'law and order' and it is the party which most often claims new and free-floating issues, and that most often 'trespasses' on other parties' issues and, for this, the author considers it a powerful threat to the state' (2012:19). While Udris (2012) is seeking to identify the role that the media play in the political scene of Switzerland, the author concludes that not only does SVP stick to its 'own' issues, such as migration or Europe, but it also 'trespasses' political opponents' issues. In addition, Udris (2012) claims that 'new issues such as media policy or education, expand the scope of its core messages and exclusionist, populist frames pitting itself against the political elite and against foreigners in a conflict line of 'SVP versus the rest' (2012:21).

5.6. Conclusion

For the past few decades SVP has experienced significant electoral success which grew especially rapidly after 1999. The party has been identified with policies and issues regarding immigration, and has organised numerous campaigns, especially since 2000, on proposed referendums in order to apply stricter laws on immigration, crime and citizenship aimed essentially at foreigners. Faithful to ethnonationalism and the concept of a strong Swiss state, SVP, particularly gaining from the support and contribution of Blocher, an acknowledged charismatic leader who led the party to become one of the most powerful in the country, has managed to present radical right ideology to the people in Switzerland and dramatically influence the Swiss political scene.

The strength of the party lies in its electoral campaigns, particularly in relation to referendums, which mainly concern anti-immigration policies. The posters created for these campaigns have caught the attention of the public and have been characterised by many people as provocative and racist. The SVP's approach to the rejection of immigration has however, been broadly welcomed and admired by several radical right

parties in other European states, some of which are NPD in Germany, or *Chrysi Aygi* in Greece which have even adopted the black sheep poster or part of it in their own political campaigns. Nevertheless, the impact of the organised campaigns of the party has led to greater public support as the party has managed to represent the sentiments of fear and insecurity in an effective way.

In a country like Switzerland, with a strong federalist tradition and a unique political system, SVP has managed to increase its support at all levels of the political system and to project an alternative, moderated and strong profile of a radical right party in Europe. The understanding of the need for an aggressive and effective campaign and the prospective potential of communication strategies appear to have been successfully adopted by SVP. In so doing, the party's electoral campaigns have become among the most successful in Europe.

6. The case of *Alleanza Nazionale* (AN)

6.1. Introduction

In September 1995, the party in the Italian political arena, most commonly linked to the fascist past of the country, the *Movimento Sociale Italiano* (MSI), was dissolved. Following a period of great change, MSI was replaced by a newly transformed party, *Alleanza Nazionale* which, under the leadership and guidance of Gianfranco Fini, continued to experience a period of evolution, from national recognition to electoral success and participation in government coalitions. Burdened by its long past, the new party struggled to purge itself of its more extreme elements and to present a modernised face to the electorate in order to attract and gain votes.

Examined as an additional case study, this chapter tracks the origins and the essential features that contributed to building the identity and image of the party. A background overview, along with an analysis of the content of the manifestos of 1995 and 2001 and the electoral campaign posters, adopted by the party within the relevant timespan of this research, are used to build a general profile of this radical right party and its communication strategies.

6.2. Background

The story of the radical right scene in Italy is encapsulated in the story of MSI. Founded in Rome in 1946 by a group of neo-fascists under the leadership of Giorgio Almirante, the party favoured a revival of Mussolini's brand of fascism, aiming an attack on Italian democracy and fighting communism (Ignazi, 2003:35-36). MSI managed to be active on the national political scene for almost fifty years, after which 'the party embraced democracy' (Milza, 2002:148). From 1946 until 1951 the party was stigmatised by the style of Almirante's leadership, e.g. his encouraging of increasing violent attacks against communists and stating his unwavering devotion to the ideals of fascism. In 1951, Augusto De Marsanich, a moderate conservative politician, who was in favour of the incorporation of MSI into the mainstream Italian political arena, replaced Almirante until 1954, when Arturo Michelini became the new party leader. Maintaining a moderate profile, the party managed to raise its popular

vote at a national level and developed as one of the most significant post-war neo-fascist parties, with a continual presence in the Italian parliament. Michelini led the party until his death in 1969, and Almirante once again became the leading figure of MSI. In the 1972 general elections, MSI having renamed itself as *Movimento Sociale Italiano–Destra Nazionale* (MSI-DN) gained 8.67%, the highest result it ever achieved. By the end of the 1980s, its poor levels of electoral support and Almirante's leadership were increasingly challenged by members of the party, especially the more moderate ones (Gilbert, 1995:155). By 1987, when Almirante retired, MSI was left in a state of division and confusion. After a short period during which Pino Rauti led the party, Fini, a protégé of Almirante's, became the new leader of the party in 1991.

Fini had taken responsibility for the MSI's youth movement in 1977. At the age of twenty-five he was determined to change the official party line: 'his project consisted mainly of reconstructing traditional party identity and reappraising the strategy of *inserimento*⁸ strategy' (Ignazi, 2007:701). Fini was to remain the leading figure of the reconstituted party from its foundation in 1994 until it merged with the Il Popolo della Libertà (PdL) party, in early 2009. He is acknowledged for his media and verbal skills, as well as his capability for 'staying calm', all of which have created an attractive profile for the voters, in an environment in which there is an underlying question of trust regarding the political system and a general fear of the legacy of the economic insecurity that Italy has frequently experienced (Gallagher, 2000:160).

As pointed out by Milza (2002), Rauti's ambition had been to position the party as a more liberal entity in order to attract a part of the communist-oriented electorate. He saw that this could be achieved by developing a stance which was more anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist. This was to be altered by balancing a denial of identification with anti-immigration sentiments against 'similar accusations against American imperialism' (Milza, 2002:459). In order to attract independent voters to a new label, in 1993-4 MSI promoted a new organization that would work as an umbrella, *AN*⁹(Ignazi, 1996:702). The party's electoral campaign against the parties participating in the government coalition combined with its populist approach, and

⁸ Gain acceptance through cooperation with other parties

were used in order to tap into the electorate's dissatisfaction (Gallagher, 2000:161) and attract the attention of the electorate.

Embedded in the parliamentary process and determined to be seen to have disengaged from anything associated with the era of Mussolini, the former MSI, renamed itself and succeeded in coming to power after 1994 by participating in a coalition government led by Silvio Berlusconi, where it was allocated five ministers and twelve deputy ministers. In January of 1995, at a conference in Fiuggi, MSI was officially dissolved. In a period when the electorate was dissatisfied by the range of corruption across the political arena, under the government led by the *Partito Socialista Italiano* (PSI) until 1992, the political scene started to transform. For many years, because of the fact that MSI was one of the oldest radical right parties in Europe, it was almost cocooned from accusations of corruption due to its lack of participation in any past government, a fact that proved to be a great asset.

Another factor that played an important role in the development and the transformation of MSI was the 'attack' against the political system from another radical right party, *Lega Nord* (LN) (Gallagher, 2000:161, Valentini, 1993 in *La Repubblica*). The aggressive rhetoric that the LN had chosen had advantaged the MSI and its proposals for more 'moderate' policies, which was beneficial when the opportunity for the re-establishment of the MSI in the Italian political arena arrived in 1993 during the peak of the political crisis in the country. The largest parties in the country, such as *Democrazia Cristiana* (DC) and the PSI, were facing accusations of corruption and the number of their supporters was diminishing rapidly (Gallagher, 2000:162). This provided opportunities for other parties, such as MSI, to woo their voters.

In the local elections of 1993, Fini had been a candidate for the mayoralty of Rome, whilst Alessandra Mussolini, the granddaughter of *Il Duce*, was a candidate in Naples. Each gained a share of the vote that exceeded 40% (Gallego, 1999:13). The main argument of the party was that they were never involved in the investigation of

⁹ The name of the AN is not accidental: it was chosen in order to express opposition to the Democratic Alliance, a party formed in 1992 aiming to succeed in building a coalition between the center-left forces.

mani pulite¹⁰, and Fini also managed to attract the support of Silvio Berlusconi who stated that 'if I was in Rome I would definitely vote in favour of Fini' (Valentini, 1993 in *La Repubblica*).

As suggested above, Fini had decided to take advantage of the dissatisfaction of the electorate and work on attracting new voters, a strategy similar to that of radical right parties across Europe. In December 1993, he gained the support of the party for the foundation of new alliance, one which was apparently more modern and moderate in the form of the AN (Gallagher, 2000:163). The new party was promoted as a 'shelter' for all Italians who considered themselves to be conservative' (Bull and Newell, 1995:78) According to Fini this marked a turning point in the political development of post-war Italy. In the 1994 parliamentary elections, the party, under the name of AN, gained an exceptional 13.5% (+8.1% from the previous election) and entered the government coalition formed by Berlusconi (1994-1996) (Gallego, 1999:13). In the same year the party won seven seats in the European Parliament.

The appearance in the mid 1990s of the media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi, who created *Forza Italia* (FI), was a factor that contributed to the transformation of the Italian political scene. Berlusconi took advantage of the media that he controlled to promote FI, a party that created the impression of a new political alternative (Gallagher, 2000:165). The opportunity for participating in the government arrived in 1994 with the success of Berlusconi's FI and his offer of a coalition partnership with the MSI (Ignazi, 1996:703). The party entered the coalition with Berlusconi's FI and Umberto Bossi's LN, with a different image and under the new label of MSI-AN (Baldini, 2001:2).

FI managed to establish an alliance with the LN and AN. Thus, FI led to the coalition that governed the country after the elections of 1994. In the national elections of May 2001 the same coalition under the name of *Casa delle Libertà* (CdL) (comprising FI, LN and AN along with a number of other parties, noticeably DC and PRI) won the majority of votes and led the government with Berlusconi as the Prime

¹⁰ The turning point for the dissolution of the First Italian Republic was "Operation Clean Hands" (*mani pulite*) which started in 1992 when an investigation into scandals, led by Antonio Di Pietro, began. The judges brought to the surface dozen cases of corruption-, first in Milan and then throughout Italy, - ~~starring~~ politicians and businessmen (Vannucci, 2009)

Minister, while Fini became Deputy Prime Minister. Fini also served as Foreign Minister from November 2004 to May 2006.

AN managed, at the first general elections in which it officially took part in 1994 to gain 13.5% of the vote and this increased to 15.7% in 1996. After that, the party started losing support but still succeeded in maintaining its place as the third strongest party in the country (12.0% in 2001). In 2006, the last election in which AN participated as a separate entity, it gained 12.3% of the popular vote, seventy-one seats in the Chambers of Deputies and forty-one seats in the Senate. In 2008, Berlusconi and Fini founded a new party by merging FI and AN, which was named Popolo della Libertà (PdL), and with LN as an ally, PdL achieved a successful electoral result a few months later.

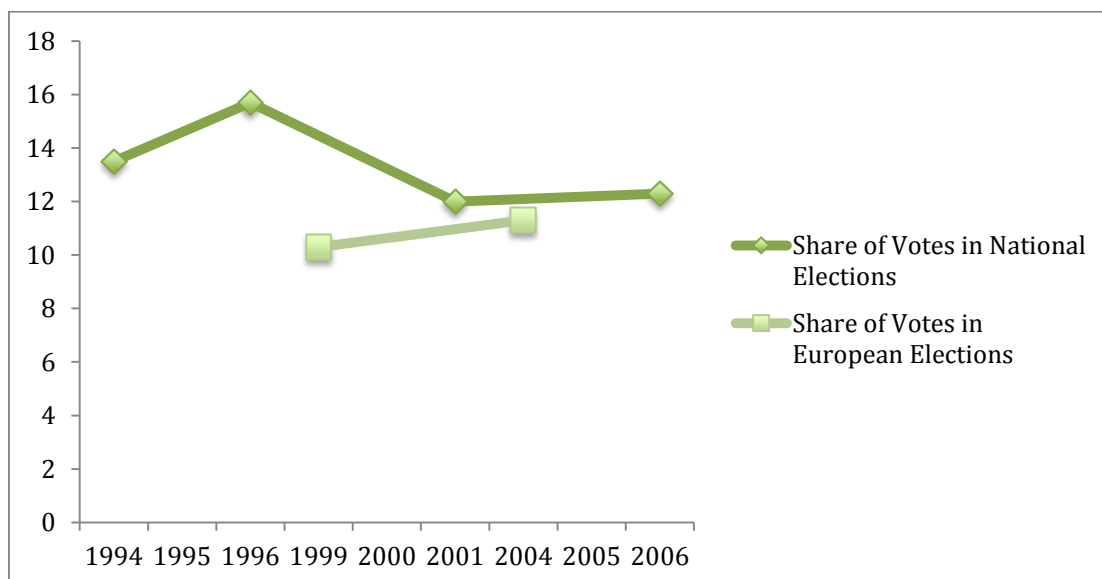


Figure 6:1 Election Results since 1994 (AN)

6.3. Structure and Ideology

In its first official document entitled '*Pensiamo l' Italia: Il domani c'è già*' (Let us think about Italy: the future is now) the party rejected any antidemocratic, fascist alternative and advocated the reform of what it held to be a flawed representative system, but always within the bounds of freedom and liberty which were seen as unimpeachable values (AN, 1995). In the introduction to the document, Fini directly emphasises the importance of creating a strategy of action in both the short and long

term. More specifically, he stresses the importance of ‘future alliances, the fate of the legislature, participation in the Berlusconi government, the role of other parties; in a word, the whole so-called ‘current affairs’ of the party (AN, 1995).

In the introductory paragraph of the party’s official programme, a presentation of the thoughts behind the creation of AN takes place as well as its link to MSI. The intention of Fini is to clarify that the new party respects the commitments, the history and the political culture of MSI, which have been undertaken as the party’s new starting point.



Figure 6:2 Symbol of AN

It was decided that the symbol of the party was going to be a circle, on top of which ‘Alleanza Nazionale’ would be written in white on a blue background, followed by a smaller, inset circle containing a tricolour flame on a red trapezoidal base. ‘MSI’ appears in the base, in red, from which the red white and green colours of the Italian national flag appear like a burning flame. Although claiming to be post-fascist, the party chose to retain the old fascist symbolism of the tricolour flame of MSI, albeit in a reduced size, below the party’s name. The party insignia has worked as a signifier of what the party stands for, managing to combine the party’s identity from its origins up to the newly-launched AN.

It was made clear from the beginning that AN solemnly repudiated all forms of dictatorship and totalitarianism, and believed in democracy and freedom as insuppressible values together with Christian values; an ‘absolute’ rejection of discrimination, ‘a spiritual vision of life and finally, identification with national tradition’ (AN, 1995). The intention of AN was to start speaking an old and new language at the same time, opening up to civil society, showing Italians in a different

light compared to the recent past. For AN, the politics of alliances are no longer an alternative to the system (AN, 1995).

The aim of the party is to create

[a] constitution that demonstrates the modernity of the right, its ability to overcome the party form and to engage the best energies of the party ... inspired by the desire to restore Italy to the Italians (AN, 1995)

Finally, the document did not deny the fascist history of the nation and maintained a sentimental attachment to the leaders and followers who had fallen in the service of fascism (Gregor, 2006:66).

A new beginning?

At the 1995 party conference the official manifesto, announced in the conference, was a declaration against the fascist origins of the party, condemning any anti-immigration actions. (Wal, 2010:39, Griffin, 1998). The second chapter of the manifesto contains the main values and principles of the party and places emphasis on respect for the individual. As previously commented, there is a clear distancing of the identity of the party from racism and any form of totalitarianism in whatever form it may be proposed (Sznajder, 1998), and puts emphasis on the respect of the individual, regardless of his or her origins, religion and social background (Gallego, 1999:13).

Based on its official thesis, democracy, according to the AN, cannot exist without respect for the individual and thus, for AN, a way of rejecting racism is to reject totalitarianism. 'Our condemnation of racism, is the condemnation of totalitarianism, of force as means of enforcement. It is our belief that without respect for the individual and for people there is no democracy, because true democracy is the sovereignty of the people' (AN, 1995). The democratic principle of the party is underlined as the preservation and practice of freedom, as a value and valuable asset (AN, 1995). It is that which distinguishes the political right from fascism and even establishes the break from a direct lineage from it. From this preservation, AN proposes, the right of freedom, which is understood as a guideline, follows its concept of

[t]he state, of society, of economic relations and it is it that inspires the political actions, tense affirmation of the human and of the Italian Right (AN, 1995)

For AN, the conservative right-should not be considered the result of fascism On the contrary the values of the right, for AN, can be located in the ‘Italian history, before, during and after the Ventennio (the twenty years of fascism)’ (AN, 1995). Similarly, AN claims that the establishment of totalitarianism was not with fascism but with the 1917 socialist revolution, and that it managed to endure until the late 1990s (AN, 1995).

Sznajder notes that the denunciation of racism and anti-Semitism was generally perceived as a progressive effort towards democratisation for AN. As he asserts, ‘they saw it as reaffirming the strong revisionist trend in neo-fascism, which divides the history of the movement into two periods’ (Sznajder, 1998). In his work, he highlights that

[t]he first period is explained as the one ‘of ‘good’ fascism until 1938, when many positive steps were taken to strengthen the Italian state, and the second one is the period ‘of ‘bad’ fascism when mistakes, such as the alliance with Germany, enactment of the racial laws and entering the war, were made; a usual neo-fascist explanation for the racism and anti-Semitism of the past (Sznajder, 1998).

Eatwell also believes that the party distanced itself from all forms of anti-Semitism, specifically denouncing those anti-Semitic and racist groups, more Nazi than Fascist, that still haunted the party (Eatwell, 1997; Gregor, 2006).

Drawing a line between AN and MSI, the party gradually started separating itself from its fascist roots and making efforts to approach Jewish groups. This tactic was critical for the future of the party, as it provoked the more radical basis to isolate themselves from the rest of the party, which allowed it to present a more popular conservative image and join the European People’s Party grouping in the European Parliament. It could then be placed in the centre-right scale of the political spectrum along with FI. In accordance with this, Fini is explicit in his rejection ‘of the shameful chapters in the history of Italy’ (Gregor, 2006:66), referring to fascism as *il male assoluto* (‘absolute evil’) (Padovani, 2008:757). The problem is located, according to

the party, in the construction of the Second Republic, and primarily it requires an appropriate reformation of the institutions. It is the reformation that will question the nature of democratic participation and the needs of decision-making policy, resulting in a State, which will be a free, open, and pluralistic state (AN, 1995).

As Sznajder explains, this analysis regards ‘the political relationship between liberty and authority as governed by the constitutional order of each nation where it is claimed that the First Italian Republic favoured oligarchies because of the dichotomy between formal political rights and real participation in the proportional representation system (Sznajder, 1998). Thus, the purpose of the institutional reform is to achieve more efficient forms of direct democracy and initiatives. In doing so, there should be a bridge connecting the gap between the political entities and the voters by minimising the power of the politicians and by engaging with a ‘majoritarian electoral system and making frequent use of referendums so that the citizen votes for ideas and not for party machines’ (Sznajder, 1998). As the manifesto states:

[T]he AN wants to be considered part of a great, libertarian, pacifist, conservative revolution (AN, 1995)

Promoting traditional values

AN's political programme put emphasis on traditional values of family and the sovereign territorial integrity of the nation (Gregor, 2006:66). These positions are often close are close to those of the Roman Catholic Church (Gallagher, 2000:166). AN supports stricter measures to control immigration along with stricter law enforcement and implementation of harsh penalties, and finally supports Israel, the US and European integration (Ignazi, 2008). The first objective of AN is to promote living conditions that enable people and groups to live in freedom and honesty and to boost social solidarity.

[W]e feel we are heirs and scholars of Roman civilisation and of Christianity that has its roots in the message brought by Peter to Rome and spread in the West and throughout the world. We are so attentive to the Church with particular emphasis on its social doctrine and support the Catholic values as they reflect the culture and social life of our country
(AN, 1995)

The term ‘social solidarity’ is commonly used in this part of the manifesto, emphasising the intention of the party’s policies. Additionally, voluntary organisations would be granted-‘responsibility’ while emphasising social solidarity and support (AN, 1995). These ideas, according to Sznajder (1998), are based on the general idea of the essential role of the family ‘as the basic social unit’ along with the principles of the Catholic values and integrity. Having said that, the AN recommends anti-abortion policies, together with programmes to support families in need and incentives for families that care for elderly and handicapped members (AN, 1995). These ideas also resonate with the notion of a ‘Big Society’ which was outlined by David Cameron in the Conservative’s Party’s 2010 election manifesto, where the aim was to encourage groups and communities to take responsibility for a range of activities at a local level¹¹.

These AN policies also have some similarity with forms of corporatism, a system where interests are represented directly within the political system in the form of organised groups, e.g. ‘corporations’ in Spain during Franco’s period. In this type of system, socio-political organization, economic and social interests are represented directly within the political system in the form of organised groupings or the so-called ‘corporations’. In a similar way the term can be applied in a context in which the individual interest groups or ‘corporations’ are defending their own members’ interests without taking into account the general public good. In practice, corporatism can be detected in Primo de Rivera's dictatorship or in Franco’s regime in Spain, as well as in Mussolini’s regime in Italy. Although corporatist systems on the sense of a political systematic have now practically evaporated, they still can be detected in periods of economic and social crisis where such approaches revive.

National identity

National identity is one of the major concerns of AN. For the party, national identification along with their belief in the importance of Italy's role in the international scene and the recovery of its great cultural traditions have been and will continue to be the fundamental principles around which the party would design and implement a broad and idealistic cultural policy (AN, 1995). For this reason there should be a plan of protection and conservation of Italy’s cultural treasures and the

¹¹ For more information look at “David Cameron: PM’s speech on ‘Big Society’” <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-on-big-society>

many activities that revolve around the cultural and artistic heritage of the country (AN, 1995).

When it comes to cultural policy, AN sees the protection and conservation of Italy's cultural heritage as a key principle which is maintained as a primary goal of the party (AN, 1995). National identity, the statement of Italy's role in the international scene, the recovery of its great cultural traditions, linguistic as well as literary, have been and will continue to be the fundamental principles which will be paramount to designing and implementing a cultural policy which has a broad spectrum. Protection and conservation of cultural heritage, key principles of the many activities that have revolved around the cultural and artistic heritage of the country until today, remain primary goals.

In addition, education, for AN, is the means by which national unity can be maintained. For this reason, a national curriculum and high quality teaching throughout the education system are the primary guarantees for the maintenance and growth of national identity (AN, 1995). In terms of health care, the party proposes a comprehensive reform of health care, protecting the right of everyone to quality treatment both in the public and private sectors equally (AN, 1995).

Economic approach

Furthermore, although the party supports market economics and holds favourable views on liberalisation and the privatisation of state industries, AN has a more liberal approach concerning economic policies in comparison to FI (Agnew, 1997). For AN, the development of poor countries is both an ethical and political matter and should be a primary interest for rich countries. Having said that, the party promotes the idea of countries with advanced economies transferring part of their capital to poor countries in order to strengthen and contribute to their (poor countries) economic development (AN, 1995).

At the same time, however, Italy, according to AN, can boast of a large and widespread network of small and medium-sized industries which are dynamic, competitive and creative - at least in some sectors (AN, 1995). Industries that are

already in crisis in Italy should be transferred to countries beyond the Mediterranean, like Lebanon, Egypt, Morocco etc, where labour is cheap and plentiful (AN, 1995).

Concerning employment policies, the party proposes a reconsideration of means whereby the social needs of workers can be protected, and for this reason it asks for the implementation of that part of the Constitution, which deals with trade unions and labour relations. More specifically, it wants an overhaul of regulations concerning the legal recognition of trade unions. Moreover, the policy of consultation between government, employers and trade unions, must be addressed and all social partners must then reach a new form of agreement. This would solve problems associated with the lack of transparency in industrial relations through a revision of the legislation about union representation (AN, 1995).

Law and order, and immigration

The AN highlights that the organised crime is one of the major issues in Italy and suggests a stricter approach, e.g. forcing severer penalties, implementation of the law and a systematic purging of bureaucracy and courts. The law should punish the use of all kinds of drugs, prostitution and illegal immigration. More specifically, the use of drugs should be prohibited, and severe punishments should be handed out to people smuggling drugs into the country and to those telling them to minors. Additionally, there should be a new law related to curbing prostitution, which has become an alarming issue, which has spread across the country (AN, 1995).

Finally, concerning immigration, according to AN there is also a need for new rules, which would replace the 'ineffective and now, expired Martelli law' (AN, 1995). Having said that, those who have a working contract (or can get one) should be allowed to stay, but the others must be expelled. For the party, illegal entry into the country should be considered a crime and, as it points out, internal and border security is the right of each citizen. It requires more appropriate intervention to support law enforcement in order for this to be achieved (AN, 1995).

Foreign policy and EU

When it comes to the international position of the country the AN emphasises the ambition to expand the Italian citizenship and voting rights to Italians around the

world. By doing so, the party underlines the significant ‘importance of the ‘nation’, its culture and its network of links and loyalties’ (AN, 1995, Sznajder, 1998).

The AN does not oppose the EU, but nevertheless the party declares that the EU is a confederation of states and not a federal entity. For this reason, the party advocates an EU that is considerate of the cultural identity of each member state (AN, 1995); a union which is not based on dirigisme or bureaucratic and technocratic oligarchies (AN, 1995). The AN is against integrating the EU economically, and expresses its concerns regarding the possibility of Germany dominating in some areas while Italy would be left behind downgraded to a secondary position (Sznajder, 1998). However, the maintenance of cultural identity is stressed, (AN, 1995, Sznajder, 1998). Additionally, the party does not recognise the Maastricht treaty, as it considers it an ‘agreement between bankers’ bearing in mind the fear of a German dominance in Europe’ (Sznajder, 1995:90-91, Gallagher, 2000:166).

Environment and agriculture

Environment policy and regional planning, in which a rational agreement between central and regional authorities is seen as necessary, is an integral part of enhancing the development of the country. AN proposes an EcoTax programme, where security deposits would be used as tools ~~that~~ in order to push both producers and consumers to take into account the environmental impact of their behaviour (AN, 1995). Public information about environmental damage needs to be presented in a more thorough and timely manner. Orienting the market, scientific research, technology and production methods towards environmentally friendly choices means opting for development that values quality of life and solidarity (AN, 1995).

Agricultural wealth is another policy that AN emphasises. The party proposes that state intervention should be aimed primarily at improving production facilities, research and testing; technological development to boost agricultural production, credit to encourage regular as well as rational relations between primary producers and processing industries. For AN, there is a need to change legislation concerning supply chain relationships, so that farmers do not remain squashed between the processing industry and the needs of large-scale distribution. Instead, they should have the opportunity to establish a fruitful relationship based on mutual convenience, so that

agricultural products suit better the demands of the Italian and European markets (AN, 1995).

In the general election of 2001, a joint manifesto was constructed by all the forces that participated in the Casa delle Libertà, CdL alliance (FI, AN, CCD, CDU and LN). In the document it is stated that the programme of the coalition is based on four principles: family, development, devolution, immigration (CdL, 2013).

Family is seen as the main agency responsible for the transmission of moral values and civil rights, and as representing the future of the country. Having said that, CdL explains that the policies proposed by the alliance, such as those covering tax rules for pension funds, nursery provision, employment contracts etc., will be approached in such a way as to prioritise support for the family and the children who are the future - the face of solidarity, security and hope (CdL, 2013). The document blames globalisation, the unions, the green block and taxation for the low level of the economic development of the country, and encourages a reformation based on liberal principles. It continues by declaring the need for a thorough reform of the state apparatus in order to apply more modern ideas and techniques. Finally, the issue of immigration, according to the text, is alarming for the future of the country, as uncontrolled immigration produces an insecure and unsafe environment for Italy's citizens (CdL, 2013). For that reason, stricter controls are needed in order to violence and xenophobia spreading stop the country. If immigration is controlled and there is no more 'leaking' stop the borders, the 'Balkan mafia' could be controlled. Finally, there should be no tolerance of drugs or any form of crime (CdL, 2013). The principles of CdL are very similar to those of the AN, which explains the later incorporation of AN into PdL.

Similar to the role played by Karatzeferis in the case of LA.O.S., Fini becomes the major iconic sign for the party and its main point of reference. Gianfranco Fini, as a moderniser, popularised a new party line by incorporating conservative ideologies, such as security, family values and patriotism (Ignazi, 2008). This became one of the major foci of the communication tactics of the party. The programmatic conference held in the spring of 1998 in Verona represented, for Baldini (2001) 'the first important step towards a clear distancing from the neo-fascist imprint of AN' (2001:3), due to the

fact that in that conference ‘the debate on fascism was dealt with in more depth’; Fini himself participated in the debate by condemning once more, as in the conference of 1995, any form of fascist regime (2001:3). Nevertheless, for Baldini, apart from the declaration coming from the leadership of the party, the idea of what is happening in the internal basis of AN is less obvious, ‘with survey data on party delegates at the Conference, showing that the middle-level élite still has political attitudes very close to those of the traditional MSI, both in terms of authoritarian values and in their evaluation of the fascist regime’ (Baldini, 2001:3). Nevertheless, until its merging with FI the party strongly promoted its democratic identity and focused on encouraging traditional values and the need for a strong national identity, as key points of its communication rhetoric.

6.4. Organised Campaigns

The party’s poster choices propose a direct and simple message. In many of the posters, Fini’s image is set against a landscape accompanied by several different messages. The logo of the poster is adjusted, so that in the main circle, below the name ‘Alleanza Nazionale’, the name Fini is added in yellow capital letters. The selection of colours is white, blue, yellow and green. White, yellow and blue, alternating between text and background are the colours that the party chooses to use to communicate with the electorate.



Figure 6:3, 6:4; 6:5 Election campaign posters

Slogans like: ‘Putting myself forward – to lead Italy into the future’, ‘Italy wants to change – with you’ and ‘vote for the Italy you love – with your heart’ are aiming to the sentiment of the voter (Figures 6:3, 6:4 and 6:6 above). Fini’s figure derives sympathy and the puzzle with the missing pieces is a promise that the party can be trusted and can get the pieces together, in their right place, in order to get the whole image, and create the feeling of accomplishment.

‘More services for the people you care about – On 27th and 28th May vote AN – with your heart 2nd October is grandparents day’ (Figure 6:6). The next poster focuses on: ‘The right is on the side of the elderly. They are one of the country’s resources not a social burden’ (Figure 6:7) These posters, are accompanied by pictures of young children and elderly people, always having on the background blue, white and yellow colours. In these posters policy on the elderly and childcare appears to be a major interest for the party, which should motivate compassion and sympathy in the audience.



Figure 6:6 Election campaign poster AN



Figure 6:7 Election campaign poster AN



Figure 6:8 Election campaign posters AN

AN often refers to the changes of the system, which are necessary for it to work in favour of the citizens rather than for politicians or for the benefit of specific interests. The party promises to defend citizens' rights and stop the exploitation of the system and uses slogans like 'More money to families. Less money to politicians. More funding for health services. Our budget will balance the books as is the case with your family budget' (Figure 6:9) and 'Let's get a cut'. 10% reductions in the salaries of

politicians' (Figure 6:10), messages that aim to capitalize on the disappointment of voters, regarding the political system and politicians themselves.



Figure 6:9 Election campaign poster AN



Figure 6:10 Election campaign posters AN



Figure 6:11 Election campaign poster AN

The AN suggests that changes such as these will lead to a reformation of the country and that they thus provide the best hope for a change, 'A hope for Italy' (Figure 6:11), which suggests that there is hope if the AN can succeed, if it has the

popular support of the electorate, because together, the party and the people will have the power to work towards that change for a better future.

The observations from the analysis of the electoral campaign posters of AN suggests that one of their main focus is traditional values and especially the family. Worth noticing here is that in the poster on foreign policy and the participation of the country in conflicts that took place in the Middle East, Italy's participation is explained as being in the name of peace. This is underpinned by a philanthropic image of Italian soldiers helping a Muslim woman, followed by the slogans: 'Thank you boys' and 'Today like yesterday, you are bringing peace' (Figure 6:13). 'Illegal immigration: Enough ships have been allowed to dock. Five years are too few to become an Italian citizen. No to fast-track citizenship' (Figure 6:12). The word play on in this poster should be highlighted. In the Italian language, *approdi* refers to a ship that is sinking. The colour of the word in the poster is separated in three parts that can be read as a-p-prodi. At this point, in terms of granting citizenship to foreigners, AN targets the Prime Minister Prodi's policies depicted in this poster with a sinking boat overloaded with immigrants. The comparison of the sinking ship, therefore, reflects AN's perception of the Prodi policies that have allegedly failed.

Although the figure of Fini is not as widely used as that of Karatzaferis in the case of LA.O.S., in the earlier AN campaigns at least, the posters often contain pictures of ordinary people e.g. soldiers, children etc. By placing people as a main priority in the party's strategy, AN aims to stress sentiments concerning security, the value of the family etc. The hopes and fears of the electorate have a face that they (the electorate) can identify with, and so the campaign is based on a series of personal and family-oriented messages. Additionally, the party insignia works as a symbolic sign in all the posters, often critically placed in the middle of the poster. The colours chosen for the posters create a friendly and warm sentiment to the audience. The text that accompanies the posters also launches positive and reassuring messages, directed at the electorate, emphasising that concern for the voter is the main motivation for the party's policies.



Figure 6:12 Election campaign poster AN



Figure 6:13 Election campaign posters AN

After 2001 the communication strategy of AN changes and so its posters are focused on the symbol of PdL. Although the symbol of AN is not presented any more, Fini continues to be the face on the poster. A knotted tricolour rope stands on a white background and in large capital letters different slogans are provided. In one of the

posters, a slogan ‘For greater security there is Alleanza. AN for the people of freedom. Italy rise up!’ is displayed along with Fini’s picture, the tricolour knotted rope and PdL’s logo. In this specific case the communication of these billboards is twofold, as evidenced by the play on words of the slogan that offers different reference points. Firstly, the poster wants to reassure the electorate of the presence of the party, AN, which still exists, despite the disappearance of its individual symbol from the election lists and, secondly, the slogan launched one of the themes of the campaign, that of safety, an issue that is very dear to the electorate. AN, therefore, is presented as the party which will guarantee the principle of security, the fight against crime etc. The inscription at the bottom, ‘National Alliance for the People of Freedom’ under the knotted flag, the symbol of a strong national bond, points to the future union between the two parties who both have their love for Italy as their fundamental reference point.



Figure 6:14 Election campaign posters AN

The second set of election posters of AN, after having clarified and strengthened the relationship with its constituents, performs the task of making known the points of its political programme. The main themes on which its communication hinges are: security, justice and IRS. The slogans that express them ‘More help for families. Less taxes for Italians. For greater security there is Alleanza AN for the people of freedom’, ‘Never again have illegal immigrants on your doorsteps. For greater security there is Alleanza. AN for the people of freedom’ and ‘No reduced sentences. Those who commit crimes must pay for them. For greater security there is Alleanza AN for the people of freedom’.

Colours and graphics help to make pleasant the whole message, again along with selection of white and blue colours, alternating between text and background. The blue

and white is a combination of colours broadly used to represent the national sports teams of the country, whereas the tricolour knot represents the bond that holds tightly the country together.



Figure 6:16 Election campaign posters AN

6.5. Success

For Ignazi, the MSI/AN breakthrough can be explained by two sets of factors; the first concerns long-term changes in Italian society: it refers to the de-radicalisation of political conflict and the 'historicisation of fascism' (Ignazi, 2008:703). As Ignazi (2008) underlines, the MSI was 'progressively perceived as a 'normal' political factor and this 'latent acceptance, along with the lack of social tension and political violence, 'normalised' the vote in favour of the MSI' (2008:703). For Ignazi (2008), the vote for the MSI was no longer undertaken as an action against the system, but it was more like a protest vote similar to people's attitude in other cases of European parties with a similar political presence.

The second set of factors which produce evaluations on the factors that contributed to the success of MSI/AN, for Ignazi, consist of five short-term elements: 'the party's non-involvement in the investigation of political corruption in the 1990s; the collapse of Christian Democracy; its unexpected success in the local elections in December 1993, mainly in Rome and Naples; the legitimacy offered by Berlusconi's FI when the MSI was accepted for the first time as a partner in a coalition and finally the excellent performance of Gianfranco Fini in the media' (see Ignazi, 2008:704).

Leadership

Gregor (2006), profiles Fini as an 'attractive candidate' in a political arena awash with political scandal; Fini was free of the suggestion of corruption, and attracted the attention of Silvio Berlusconi, providing him with more favourable public attention in the media than previous leaders of MSI. Ruzza and Fella argue that Fini has been playing two distinct games for a long time. They argue that although he focused on retaining the leadership within his party and on interpreting public opinion regarding worries about immigration, he has occasionally displayed an intransigent hardline stance, while, he has also been playing an individual game in terms of positioning himself as the potential heir of Berlusconi (Ruzza and Fella, 2009:158).

According to Sznajder (1998), Fini managed to contribute drastically to the transformation of the image of the party from a violent outcast to a 'soft-spoken' legitimate political party. For him, without Fini's involvement it would be unmanageable to 'project a semblance of political civility and good citizenship, while being actively supported by other individuals and groups within the party' (Sznajder, 1998). Sznajder explores Fini's strategy in relation to three core fundamentals. The first is a strong statement of encouragement for the values of freedom and democracy, followed by a strong disapproval of racism and anti-Semitism and the abandonment of 'the corporatist stance of fascism in favour of advancement of the ideas of social market economics designed to combine economic efficiency with social solidarity and participation' (Sznajder, 1998).

Having said that, the party tried to project a proposal for a reformation of the political system, in order to defeat the disadvantages and flaws of the Italian political system. This would be succeeded through a stronger initiative and direct democracy practices and less government power, in order to eliminate any potential corruption experience similar to the examples of the country's past. For Sznajder (1998) the main perception behind these propositions by Fini was the transformation of AN that would manage to attract new voters and become strong enough to participate in government coalitions and cooperate with other mainstream parties of the Italian political scene.

Both Ignazi and Sznajder explain the transformation of AN into a radical right party which was recognised as an established political factor in the modern Italian

scene, leaving behind the heritage of MSI and creating a more moderate and modern image reflecting the goal of broadening the party's electoral constituency (Ruzza and Fella, 2009:157). During the programmatic conference of 1998 there was a centralisation of 'many of its organisational elements (the party leader is now called President, and has almost 'absolute power' over the internal decision-making bodies) (Baldini, 2001:3). In terms of populism, the AN has proceeded cautiously. Opponents have argued that, beyond the facade of a respectable leader, such as Fini, a political group of nostalgic longing for the fascist past still characterises the party (Ruzza and Fella, 2009:190). The charismatic leadership of Fini and his contribution to the party's success cannot be underestimated. His politeness and pragmatism inspired respect from the electorate that started to show some faith in MSI/AN (Gallagher, 2000:182). Fini started his political career as a protégé of Giorgio Almirante in a period when the MSI was trying to violently tear down Italian democracy by force. Later, he declared fascism as a unique episode in history that cannot be allowed to happen again and emphasised his faith in democracy (Gallagher, 2000:182).

6.6. Outcomes

The transformation of MSI into AN has been accompanied 'by the adoption of a public discourse in which the adherence to democratic values has become more explicit, and references to the fascist past more critical' (Huyseune, 2002:8). This observation could have been made in the first manifesto of the new party in 1995. Without 'underestimating the effort to convince the public opinion in Italy of its democratic origins', the party still cannot be seen as 'liberal and democratic, despite the effort in its official documents to avoid extremist and racist language and the maintenance of distance from radical right parties at the European level' (Huyseune, 2001-2002:8). AN made a great effort to adopt a liberal approach which appeared to reject any form of fascism and 'consigned its former anti-capitalist gestures to the history books' in its rhetoric (Gallego, 1999:13). However, not all members of the former MSI accepted the 'Fuiggi turn'. Rauti, in 1995, founded the *Movimento Sociale Fiamma Tricolore* (MSFT), while, other splinter parties like *Fronte Sociale Nazionale* (FSN) and *Forza Nuova* (FN) were born in the years that followed (Padovani, 2008:757). Fini's decision to visit the Holocaust Memorial at Yad Vashem in Israel was seen in a negative light by a number of supporters of AN and as a rejection of the

roots of the party. Some referred to Fini as *un servo degli Ebrei* (a slave of the Jews), and a number of Anti-Fini demonstrations took place (Padovani, 2008:757).

Despite these efforts at distancing the party from its past and especially at a local level, there still remain some extremist tendencies and nostalgia for fascism. All things considered, however, the 'balance of liberty and authority', as recommended by the AN, would support a restrained form of democracy, expressing favour for a 'strong central authority' and defending 'centralist and authoritarian views' at the same time as following a fascist model of government. Additionally, a desire for direct democracy in the form of referendums on specific policies could also been taken as an indicator of populism (Sznajder, 1998). For Padovani (2008) the coalition of PdL, and later on of CdL in which smaller radical right parties were participating, provided AN with the opportunity to come 'to full public light as part of the mainstream political establishment' (2008:758), making former fascist figures 'respectable' in the eyes of the electorate. Similarly, Gallego (1999) characterises AN as a combination of political authoritarianism and economic liberalism, comparable to Mussolini's fascist discourse of 1922 (1999:13).

For Ignazi (2006), AN represents 'an intriguing case of evolution from die-hard neo-fascism to post-fascism and even away from extremism' (2006:265). As Sznajder (1998) stresses, 'if ideology is an important criterion, AN's theses do not fulfil the requirements of liberal democracy. If ideology is not significant, it becomes clear that the presentation and approval of the theses were merely a political propaganda exercise'. This statement by Sznajder should be taken into consideration when assessing the purpose of the communication strategies of AN, as it provides a wider perspective on the issue.

6.7. Conclusion

The significant and apparently increasing popularity of AN, after long years of isolation from the mainstream national political environment, suggests a complicated profile of voting habits in Italy. The new beginning of the AN marked a new period in the post-fascist era and levels of radicalism in Italian politics. Italy, a country with a strong radical right sub-culture, managed to bring to power, albeit in coalition, a party

with a long history and many ideological contradictions. The communication strategies of the party, its ideology and its structure revolving around the strong political figure of Fini, mark the party as one the most notable representatives of the radical right party family in Western Europe.

The chapter that follows focuses on the content analysis of election manifestos and public speeches of the three cases that have been selected as primary data for this research project. These incorporate interpretations of basic ideological tenets of radical right parties. The Computer Aided Text Analysis (CATA) used assists in identifying patterns in the communication strategies of the parties in order to support the hypothesis that the parties take a common approach in terms of making contact with the electorate and conveying their message. The analysis presents similarities and differences in the three cases.

7. The content analysis approach: understanding party preferences

7.1. Introduction

Before starting a discussion on the results of content analysis regarding the data it is useful to reprise the purpose of this research. As texts are one of the means used to examine the manner that the political parties choose to communicate with the audience-electorate, the focus of the first part of this chapter will be on the analysis of the party manifestos and a selection of speeches, which are seen as individual ‘texts’. This analysis is mainly based on content as explained in the methodology chapter above (see Chapter 3). The selected data derive from period 2000-2010 and were originally delivered by the leader of each of the parties covered in this research. The composition of each text is based on the aims of the party at the time it was presented. This also took account of the audience the party wishes to addresses. Reflecting on the market-oriented perspective (see Chapter 2), since the aim of a political party is to satisfy the needs, wishes and expectations of the electorate, these elements, along with its ideology and policies can be considered as additional factors influencing the official party line. In terms of the structure of this chapter, each case will be examined separately followed by a comparative analysis covering all three cases. The content analysis undertaken in this research is largely based on Computer Assisted Text Analysis (CATA).

The cases of LA.O.S. and SVP are examined as the main representatives of the radical right family. Additionally, the case of AN is approached as an additional, secondary study, in order to test the hypothesis and, more specifically, to test the categories. This is the reason that the data on the Italian case are less extensive and comprise just two manifestos of AN. Once the results of the analysis are known, a judgement on whether this approach can be used as a research model or method to be followed for examining other parties which might be considered as members of the radical right party family will be assessed.

7.2. The role of content analysis

As explained in Chapter 3 content analysis is chosen in order to address the communication strategies by focusing on the semantic and linguistic dimension of content. In other words, this chapter explores these strategies, in terms of the issues that the parties use in order to build an argument to help them fulfil their general aim of gaining electoral support.

Content analysis offers a possibility for looking beyond the immediate context within which a text is constructed in order to search for any hidden messages that may be implied. The messages that are emitted in written or oral form by a political party could be identified in various ways, for example in terms of style, structure, context, rhetoric, strategies and motivation of the party (Demertzis, 2002 in Tsiras, 2011:226). Through this specific project, the analysis identifies the original message in these texts which represent the parties' ideology and character in depth, and identification of radicalism receives major attention across the countries that are examined. In general, the process of content analysis can include numerous procedures. In their extended work on research methods in the social sciences, Nachmias *et al.* (1996) underline that content analysis provides a description of any special features of the material under examination and identifies and records its characteristics. This can be achieved by describing the properties of the message followed by inferences about the transmitter of the message and the reasons why it was 'sent'. The recording unit during this procedure can be a word, a theme, specific characters or even paragraphs (Nachmias *et al.*, 1996:324-326).

As discussed in Chapter 3, one of the major tools of content analysis is the formation of categories in order to provide a more explicit analysis. These categories play a major role in determining how the research question can be answered and whether the results of the content analysis will be accepted or rejected. The phases of the analysis, are described by Kyngas and Elo (2007) and comprise preparation, organising and recording of the data, beginning with the selection of the 'unit of the analysis', followed by the 'analytic process' of answering 'who, where, when, what' and why, and drawing conclusions. Following these phases of analysis, I firstly identified which data should be most appropriate in order to provide effective answers

to the questions that surround the hypothesis. After a wide search for appropriate material, the research process continued with the organising and recording of the data before proceeding to the analysis itself.

As detailed in Chapter 3 there are several steps which need to be taken before actually running a CATA. These comprise reading through the source materials, selecting the actual data and constructing the categories. After building the categories, which includes identification of key words, synonyms and indicative phrases as ‘signifiers’ of the main variable designated by each category, the coding scheme (or dictionary) is applied by the CATA software. This provides a frequency count for each category that is taken as the basis for evaluating its salience. In order to maximise the validity of the vocabulary used in the construction of the categories, the initial selection of words included terms used not only in the selected documents documents of the three cases but also in documents of other parties from across the radical right family, as a guide to how such parties communicate with the electorate, e.g. words associated with immigration. The creation of the final set of categories was pre-tested on a small sample of the documents of LA.O.S. and SVP (see also Polit, Beck and Hungler, 2001).

In this analysis, political parties are identified by the way they communicate their message to the electorate and on the basis of the selected language they use in their official manifestos and in speeches by their leaders. After having identified radical right characteristics, which include key elements of the ideology of this party family, the intention is to create an accurate means of testing whether parties can be identified as members of this family, despite efforts they might make to distance themselves from it. At the same time, this offers possibilities for comparison of parties across time and space. This represents the main driving force for building the dictionary.

In order to reduce ‘noise’ in the data, the signifiers help in refining identification of what the parties stand for. It was also necessary to accurately translate the dictionary (which had been compiled in English in the first instance) into the three languages used in this study, namely Greek, German, Italian. In each case, additional signifiers were added, based on the specific context of the words used. These related to specific

contextual factors which were only relevant to individual parties¹². The difficulties of this method have to do with the issues for each country, underlining the differences and making sure that the vocabulary and the categorisation of the data will be made as indicative of each specific context as possible. In terms of the general category titles, because all three of the parties under examination are located within the radical right family, the assumption was that their agenda, arguments, policies and ideologies are similar, and so should be the words they use to communicate their message.

Salience of the individual categories is the first thing to be examined for each case. Through this we can gain a deeper understanding of how the agenda of these parties was conveyed to the electorate. Additionally, by comparing the documents, the significance of the categories is underlined in terms of similarities and differences in any specific terms relating back to the main hypothesis. The focus is to understand the broader meaning these concepts may have, beyond a straightforward reading of the documents themselves, as well as investigating the original messages. For example: Does the frequency of references to a given issue change among the texts? What message is the party communicating to voters? What are the issues the party regards as important? Finally, does the salience of these issues prevail over time?

Bearing these questions in mind, and being aware of the possible difficulties that might occur during the process of finding answers to them, the project (as clarified above in Chapter 3) uses HAMLET II software along with NVivo software to conduct the content analysis and R language for mathematical computation and graphics.

The data comprises LA.O.S. party manifestos adopted for the elections of March 2004 and 2007. For SVP there are the manifestos of 1999 and 2007, and for AN the manifestos of 1995 and 2001. Although the time frame of this project is the first decade of the twenty-first century, the documents of 1999 and 1995 have been chosen for analysis due to the fact that they represented the official line of the parties, maintained within the chosen time frame. Apart from this, there are almost daily announcements and press releases, which reflect the official positions of the parties on

¹² For instance, when referring to nationalities, all three are addressing to their own ethnic group e.g. Italians or similarly when referring to the National Council, in Switzerland SVP refers to it as 'Nationalrat'.

various issues covering a wide range of topics. In order to produce a viable comparative analysis, official leaders' speeches are also examined in the cases of LA.O.S. and SVP, but not for AN since this is not treated as a full case study. The purpose of including the speeches in the research is to underline possibly different communication approaches between the official line of the party (manifesto) and the leader's own interpretation (speeches), especially given the paramount position of each leader within his own party. By this means, I seek to identify the parties' communication techniques, the original purposes of the strategy and the contradictions that often characterise the communication strategy of radical right parties, e.g. that of the 'Trojan horse'¹³ for LA.O.S.. Additionally, by comparing the documents I want to examine whether there is a correspondence between the categories, while pointing out the similarities and differences both within and between the parties in the selected time period.

7.3. Frequencies and relative salience in the CATA approach

At this point, the analysis is focused on the subject of communication and identification of salience; that is, the particular topics noted and repeated by the parties in the period under examination (2000-2010). After examining the official documents of the parties the next step is the categorisation of the data and the identification of the key factors that would work towards building a profile of the communication strategies of the parties (see Table 1 in Chapter 3 on methodology).

The purpose here is to create a basis by means of which further comparative analysis could be made between the cases under examination. Using the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) (CMP, 2012; Budge et al., 2001) as a guide, a comparison of the changes regarding policy emphases over time within the party manifestos is undertaken in order to compare both differences in policy positions and emphases across parties, and to examine differences across countries. The basic data used for the purposes of the project are the proportions of election programmes dedicated to each

¹³ Radical right parties in Europe are following this ideal application of a dual strategy. The parties choose to present a different communicative profile in the 'outside' and another on the 'inside'. According to this 'principle' the leaders choose to follow a moderate stance when addressing the national audience and a harder one when talking to their own. This strategy of the Trojan horse has been adapted by George Karatzafaris and is being used as an explanation to party cadres and supporters that do not see as radical a profile, as they would like.

category in a set of standardised issue areas. This allows for the gathering and creation of the best illustration of the topics and issues in the data under examination. The classification by means of the categories had been made in order to cover the total content of manifestos by identifying the statements of preference expressed.

The coding procedure creates a classification of the kind of statements parties make in their manifestos and in their official speeches. By creating categories the purpose is not only to observe the similarities or relations within the data but also data being classified as ‘belonging’ to a particular group and this ‘implies a comparison between these data and other observations that do not belong to the same category’ (Kyngas and Elo, 2007:111). The understanding that the parties’ statements are not always clear and straightforward, so during the coding stage it is essential that the meaning of the word or phrase is coded in terms of the context of the sentence or paragraph, in order to avoid any uncertainty concerning the data.

In the pages that follow, a separate over time analysis of each party is discussed. Following the qualitative analysis of the official documents and speeches in chapters 4, 5 and 6 this part of the thesis evaluates the data in a more quantitative way, and compares the case studies across the selected time frame. In addition to political circumstances (elections, campaigns, policies) and internal changes, which have occurred within the parties (leadership, mergers, membership), this chapter will discuss the key findings of the content analysis, classify communication material and underline the connection of the rhetorical textual strategies within the parties in the form of preferences in terms of the established categories.

7.4. Analysis of the three cases: CATA

7.4.1. LA.O.S.

7.4.1.1. Salience of categories in LA.O.S. documents

The semantic analysis of the texts highlights the repetition of a few significant themes, which were evaluated as such in order to create the categories. Before looking at the results of the analysis, the thesis adopts the approach that the outcomes represent

the parties' focus in relation to their ideology. The choice of topics by the party is, after all, the means by which the party presents its political positions and directs the attention of the electorate towards a set of issues that are acknowledged as being the most important to the party.

In order to handle the data effectively a code in R language was created to manage the data analysis and create graphical representation. By using R language, as described in Chapter 3, plots are produced in order to present a graphical demonstration of the frequencies. The graphs demonstrate the changes in the focus of LA.O.S.'s communication strategies in terms of the themed categories for the years 2000-2010. They also make it easier to compare the data both within and across the case studies. The first observation based on the analysis of the data concerning the case of LA.O.S. is that there are changes within the time frame under examination in the themed categories as determined above. An early impression of these changes can be identified in the Table 7:1 below.

Categories	laos_2001	laos_2003	laos_2004	laos_2006	laos_2007	laos_2009
Politics and Democracy	102	32	293	63	908	127
Society and Values	38	13	191	50	457	50
Religion	24	2	20	7	52	4
Economy	66	43	133	22	374	25
Education	8	4	39	5	216	5
Health	9	10	48	3	137	2
Culture	11	5	35	20	206	8
Environment	4	2	6	1	133	4
Immigration	10	4	29	5	108	11
Nation and National Identity	42	27	199	23	641	75
Law and Security	31	10	159	16	414	20
Development	22	12	160	22	634	26
Europe and EU	3	4	11	6	87	33
General IR	17	9	73	14	237	37
words_in_text_(sum)	4217	1207	7171	2564	11419	4506

Table 7:1a Frequencies of categories in LA.O.S. documents

Categories	laos_2001	laos_2003	laos_2004	laos_2006	laos_2007	laos_2009
Politics and Democracy	2.42%	2.65%	4.09%	2.46%	7.95%	2.82%
Society and Values	0.90%	1.08%	2.66%	1.95%	4.00%	1.11%
Religion	0.57%	0.17%	0.28%	0.27%	0.46%	0.09%
Economy	1.57%	3.56%	1.85%	0.86%	3.28%	0.55%
Education	0.19%	0.33%	0.54%	0.20%	1.89%	0.11%
Health	0.21%	0.83%	0.67%	0.12%	1.20%	0.04%
Culture	0.26%	0.41%	0.49%	0.78%	1.80%	0.18%
Environment	0.09%	0.17%	0.08%	0.04%	1.16%	0.09%
Immigration	0.24%	0.33%	0.40%	0.20%	0.95%	0.24%
Nation and National Identity	1.00%	2.24%	2.78%	0.90%	5.61%	1.66%
Law and Security	0.74%	0.83%	2.22%	0.62%	3.63%	0.44%
Development	0.52%	0.99%	2.23%	0.86%	5.55%	0.58%
Europe and EU	0.07%	0.33%	0.15%	0.23%	0.76%	0.73%
General IR	0.40%	0.75%	1.02%	0.55%	2.08%	0.82%
words_in_text_(sum)	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 7:1b: Proportions of categories in LA.O.S. documents

These tables present the frequencies and proportions of the selected categories in the texts, which have been put in a chronological order. The documents for 2004 and 2007 are the official manifestos of the party and the rest are the official speeches of the president of LA.O.S.. The first impression of examining the results is that there are significant differences within the categories in terms of frequencies that carry through each individual document. ‘Politics and democracy’ appears to be the most popular among the categories, recording its highest percentage in the manifesto of 2007, followed by ‘economy’, ‘nation and national identity’ and ‘law and security’, while at the same time some categories barely manage to reach a 0.1 in the total share, e.g. ‘Europe and EU’ and ‘Environment’ in 2001 or ‘Religion’ in 2009.

A more balanced representation of all categories can be found in the manifestos of 2004 and 2007. This can be explained, as the manifesto itself is a declaration of policies and ideas on several issues whereas speeches can be more issue-oriented or focused on specific issues depending on the place and the time the speech takes place. A more detailed analysis will be presented in the following sections.

After the foundation of the party in 2000, the focus of LA.O.S.’s interest, based on the categorised issues, is presented in the figure below:

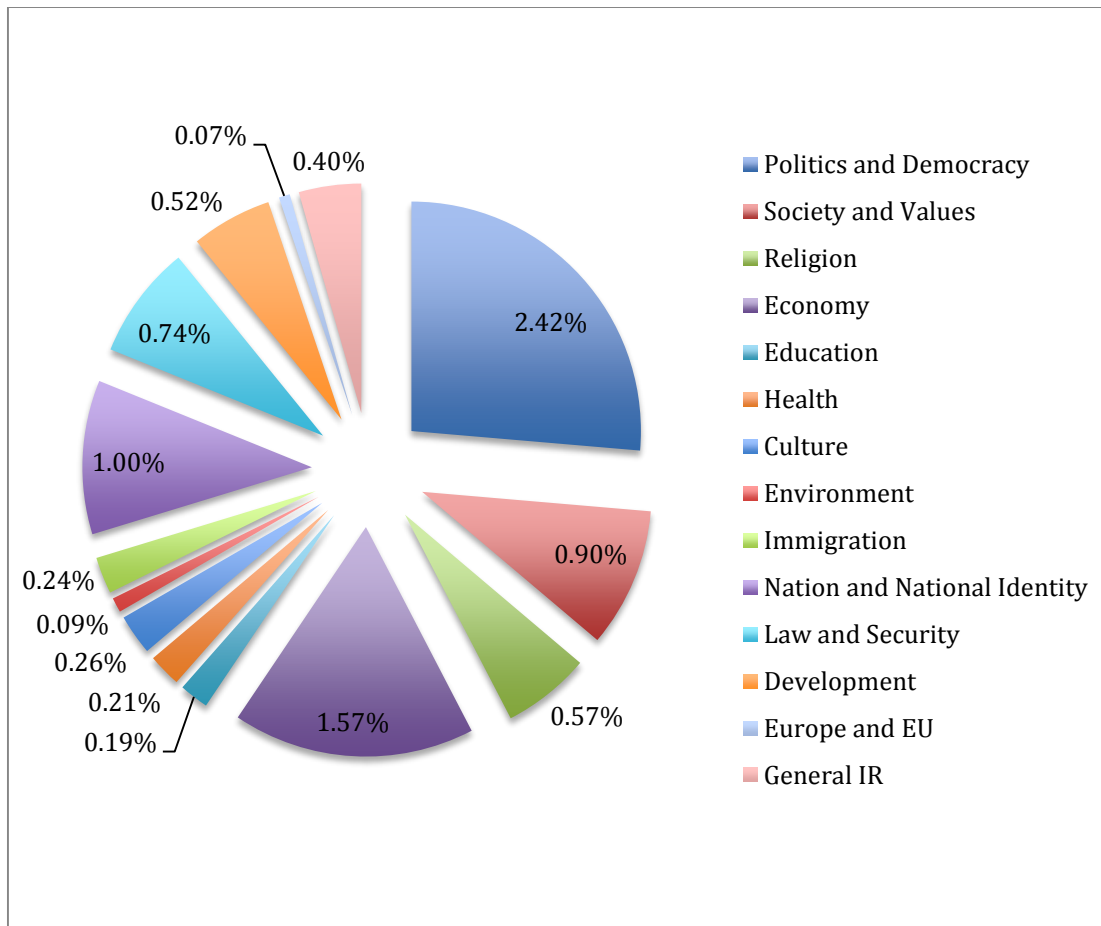


Figure 7:1 Salience of issues for LA.O.S. 2001 (%)

The data from 2001 (presented clockwise in the pie chart in Figure 7:1 above) propose a variety of references concerning general ‘politics and democracy’ with 2.42% followed by 1.57% on ‘economy’, 1% on ‘nation and national identity’ and 0.90% on ‘society and values’. One of the interesting observations provided by this chart is that a party like LA.O.S., with such a strong religious bonds and such a strong national identity and anti-immigration stance, might have been expected to demonstrate higher percentages in communicating this element of their character. This strategy continues in ensuing years, concerning issues around the Orthodox Church and illegal immigration, but changes in relation to ‘nation and national identity’. As mentioned above, LA.O.S. in 2001 was a newly founded party, without having yet polished a communication style and strategy. Bearing in mind that the party had not yet participated in any elections this first sample of data creates a rather vague idea of what messages are being chosen to be transferred to the audience/electorate.

Nevertheless, it is clear that ‘politics and democracy’ is a popular theme for LA.O.S.. The party relates to the democratic principles of the country and underlines its own democratic credentials. Stressing these is essential, as the intention of LA.O.S. is to avoid any overt links with fascism in its ideology or among its members. Another trend derived from this category, is reference to the national political scene, LA.O.S. often refers to political opponents, the corruption of the system and the incapability of the established political parties to address the problems and interests of the Greek people. Let us not forget, though, that the party is seeking to reveal deficiencies in the foundations of Greece’s parliamentary democracy. Having said that, since the established political parties are seen as corrupt, LA.O.S. suggests a more direct form of democracy based on referendum procedures. However, ‘nation and national identity’ is one of the higher scoring issues, and plays an important role in the party’s communication message. Greek identity, along with pride in the nation and its glorious history, accompanies the rhetoric of the party across the years. Finally, ‘economy’ is a popular category and is mainly related to the dissatisfaction of the electorate, especially with economic choices of the last few years, which were made prior to Greek entry into the Eurozone, i.e. government expenditure and taxation policies.

7.4.1.2. Comparing issue salience in the manifestos and leader’s speeches of LA.O.S. 2000-2010 (%)

In order to understand better any changes that occur within the time frame a comparison between the manifesto of 2004 and that of 2007 has been undertaken. However, the fact that in 2004 the party did not manage to elect a single representative to the national parliament, whereas 2007 is the first year that the party successfully entered the national parliament needs to be underlined (see Chapter 4).

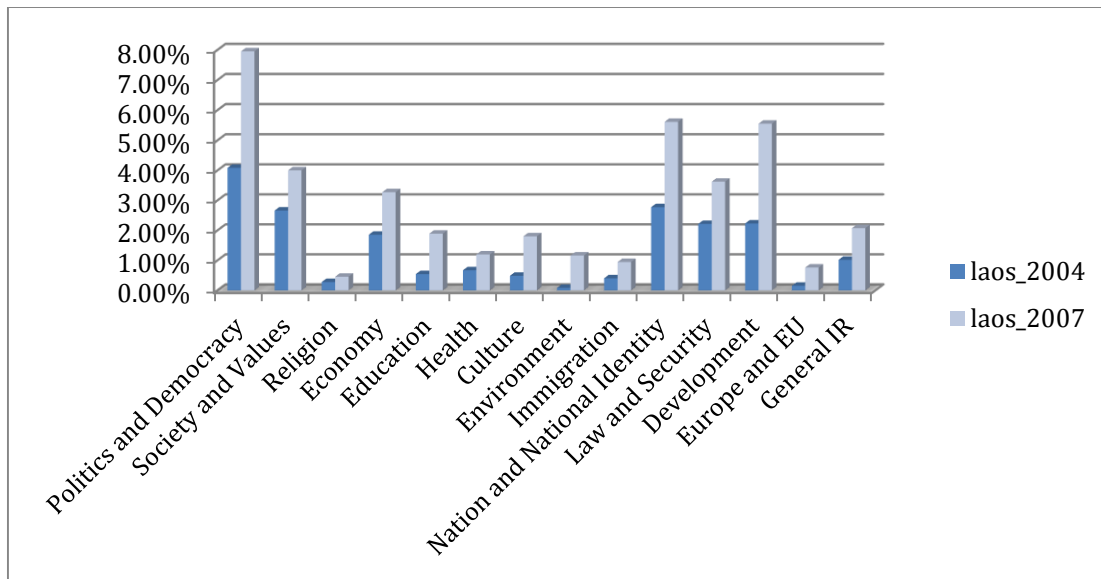


Figure 7:2 Comparing the manifestos (LA.O.S..)

Figure 7:2 presents in greater detail the change in the communication message of LA.O.S. between the two elections of 2004 and 2007. By comparing the manifestos of 2004 and 2007, useful inferences can be drawn. The party acknowledges its increase in electoral support, but also seems aware that changes need to be made in order to attract even more voters and gain the necessary popular support in order to enter the national parliament. This can be translated into the adoption of a wider spectrum of issues into the party's rhetoric. Indeed several differences are noticeable when observing the salience of the categories. The categories that are most distinct in this chart are again those concerning 'politics and democracy', 'nation and national identity', 'development', 'society and values' and 'law and security'. With almost 8% of salience in 2007 compared to 4% in 2004, 'politics and democracy' is maintained as the chief category in the rhetoric of LA.O.S.; 'nation and national identity' follows with 5.61% in 2007 and 2.78% in 2004, which underpins the radically nationalist political identity of the party. In both cases the salience of 'law and security' and 'development' increases greatly, especially in the category of 'development' since in 2004 it scored 2.23% and almost doubled this in 2007, reaching 5.55%. When examining the 'law and security' category, it should be born in mind that other categories are linked in terms of issues relating to immigration and international relations.

Immigrants are seen as a cause of the rising levels of crimes in the country, and Greek-Turkish relations are depicted as being based on a constant conflict with the risk to compromise Greece's national security. Immigration is also linked to the category of, nation and national identity, but this will be discussed below. LA.O.S., by increasing the salience of their message concerning the dangers posed by immigrants and their negative influence on Greek society, seeks to draw on xenophobic sentiments in the electorate in relation to the sensitive issue of immigration and illegal immigration, in particular, which has increased greatly since the late 1990s. Illegal immigration has remained an issue in the country from 1990 until the present (2014). After the fall of the socialist regimes in 1989, a large wave of economic migrants entered the country, originating from Albania, Bulgaria and Romania along with additional immigrants from Africa and Asia (see Eurostat, 2013). During the decade from 2000 to 2010, Greece became attractive to numerous immigrants from around the world, resulting in approximately 7% of the population being made up of immigrants from outside the EU (see Eurostat, 2013). It is important to note, however, that immigrants often consider entering Europe via Greece, because of its geographical position as a gateway to the rest of Western Europe.

Having said that, it is worth noting that the majority of instances, where immigration is mentioned in the texts of LA.O.S., is accompanied by the word 'illegal', which adds a negative layer of meaning to the term. As seen above in Chapter 4, LA.O.S.'s policies which address the issue of illegal immigration mainly take the form of calling for the removal of the law on citizenship with reference to immigrants along with several additional (negative) measures that would deteriorate their position in Greek society. Nevertheless and despite the fact that the analysis of the data does not emphasise immigration, LA.O.S. is clearly an anti-immigration party which envisions a country for the Greeks and not for the (illegal) immigrants who are considered a growing source of crime. For the party, the prosperity of the country can only be achieved by Greeks and the state should be offering social welfare and security only on a national- chauvinistic basis (see Chapter 4).

Finally, although LA.O.S. is closely identified with the Greek Orthodox Church and faith is one of the primary principles of the party identity, the category of religion is hardly evident in the texts. LA.O.S. does not appear to present a significant focus

which stresses its religious identity and thus fails to present evidence of communication in this area.

In order to contribute further to the identification of the changes in LA.O.S.'s strategy, a comparison between speeches given by Karatzaferis in the years between 2001 and 2009 is undertaken. During these years the party experienced a degree of success like no other in the past, reaching its peak in 2009. All four speeches took place at political conventions of the party and are considered as a representative sample of the communication strategies of the party, combining rhetoric along with the charismatic figure of Karatzaferis.

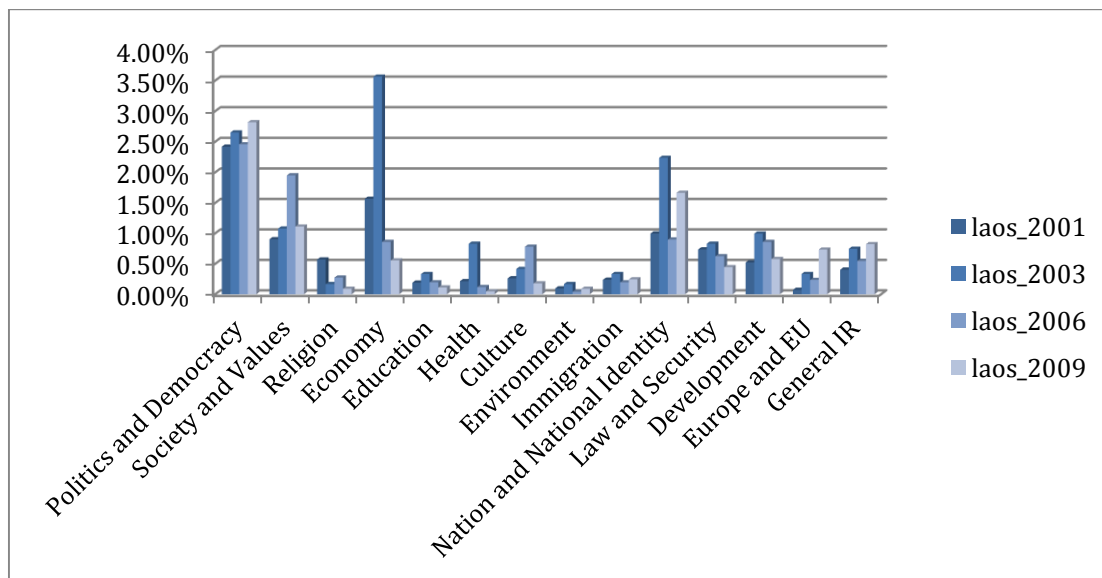


Figure 7:3 Salience of issues in Leader's Speeches LA.O.S, 2001-2009 (%)

At this point several observations can be made, first by comparing the speeches and then by contrasting the content with the one of the manifestos. 'Politics and democracy' remains as the most salient category in all cases with the exception of the speech of 2003 when the economy dominates. In addition, although 'economy' appears to be following in terms of salience in 2001 the image changes in 2006 and 2009 where 'nation and national identity' along with 'society and values' are the most salient foci in the speeches. Furthermore an important difference can be spotted in the three issues of 'religion', 'Europe and EU' and 'general IR'.

In relation to 'religion' the higher percentage for 2001 (beyond the four speeches) can be justified by the fact that in 2000, the Greek minister of justice had announced the mandatory inclusion of religion and nationality on identity cards. Due to its contradiction to the law on the protection of personal data this was to be removed. As a result, the Greek Orthodox Church immediately started objecting to the removal of religion from the identity cards and under the leadership of the head of the Church, Archbishop Christodoulos, organised campaigns and demonstrations. Moreover, the Church began a collection of signatures in order to request a referendum on the matter. The petition managed in a six-month period to collect over 3.5 million signatures, but was declined by the Greek President. During this period, Karatzaferis himself was an ally and supporter of the initiative of the Greek Orthodox Church, something that was reproduced in his own rhetoric. By adopting a strong religious identity during the period of its foundation, LA.O.S. managed to create an image based on the values of Christianity and Nation. An example can be found in the party's first conference, where Karatzaferis entered the room under the slogan of *Hellas Hellinon Christianon*, which means Greece belongs to the Greeks who are Christians, a slogan that became famous during the military junta of 1967-1974. This rather powerful slogan can also be linked to the nationalist ideology of the party and its attitude towards immigration and foreigners. Nevertheless, apart from the speech of 2001, LA.O.S. appears to have chosen not to emphasise issues relating to church and religion.

As far as the categories of foreign policy and EU are concerned, the party emerges as highly nationalist and in favour of irredentism. Also, LA.O.S. defends chauvinism and appears as an anti-American and anti-European party, rejecting the statement that 'Greece belongs to the West' as the interest of the so-called West, according to LA.O.S., often undermines Greek national interests. As seen in Chapter 4 on the positions and policies of LA.O.S. the party's political position on EU is that there should be a loose relationship between the country-member states of the EU. The party rejects the idea of a European constitution declaring that power should be controlled by the national parliaments and the people in the form of direct democracy (referendums) (see more detail in Chapter 4).

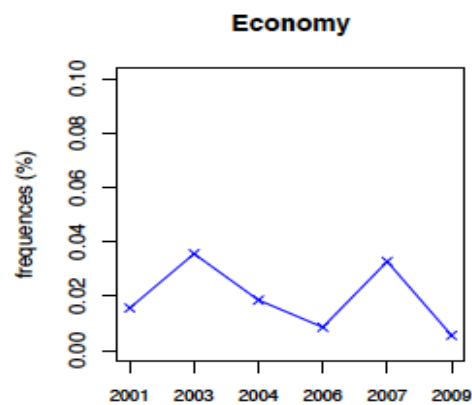
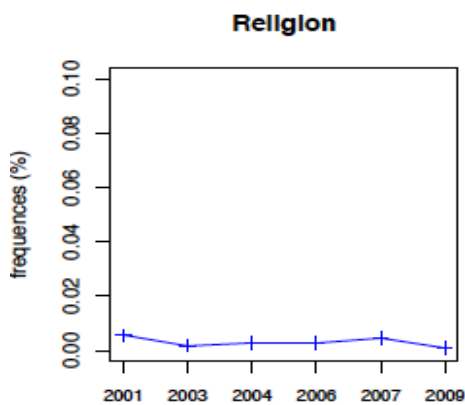
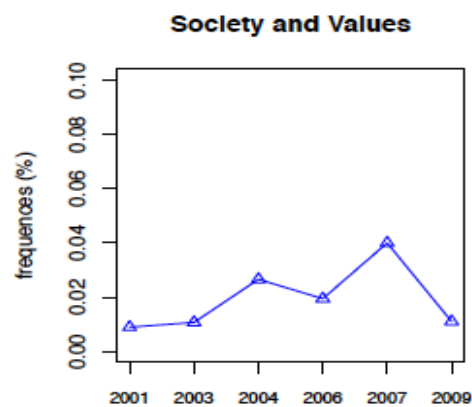
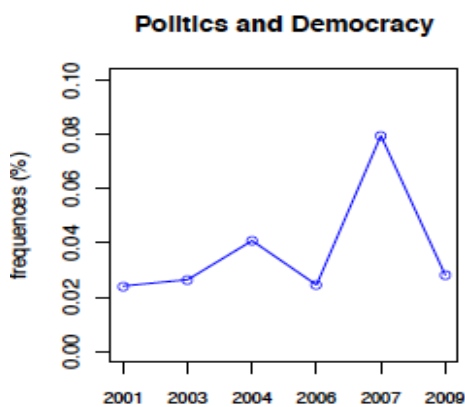
With regards to other categories, salience of issues regarding 'education', 'health', 'immigration' and 'environment' is very low, apart from the exception in

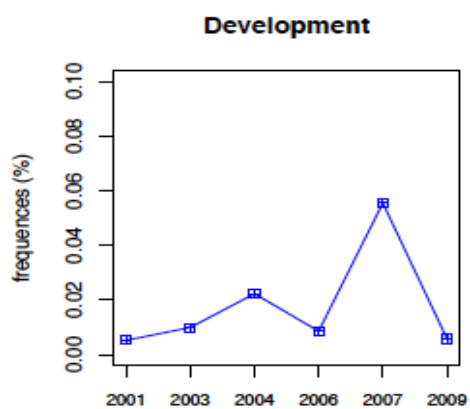
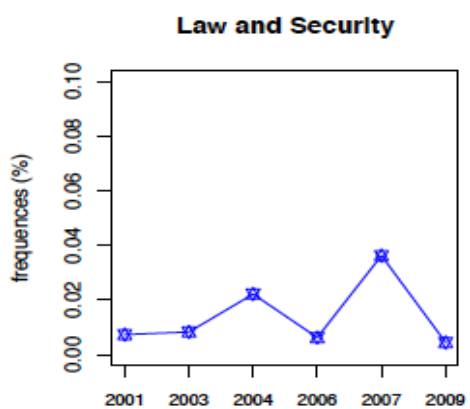
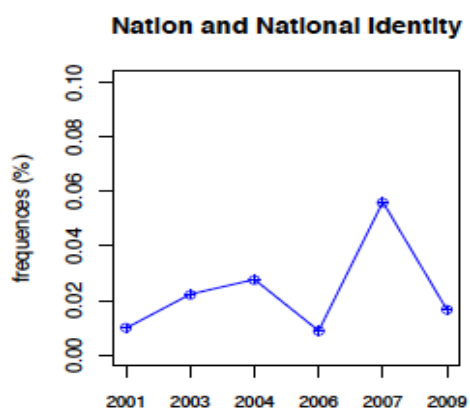
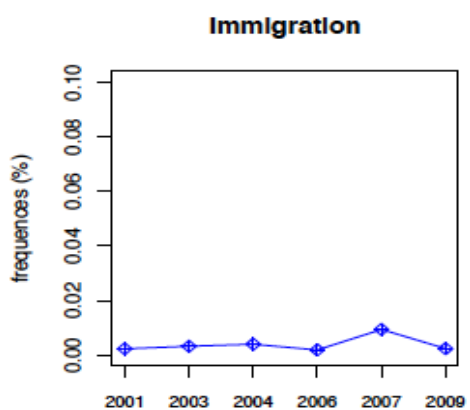
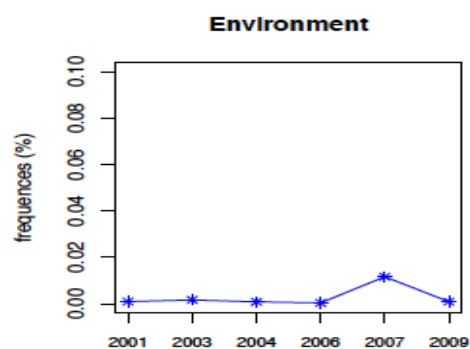
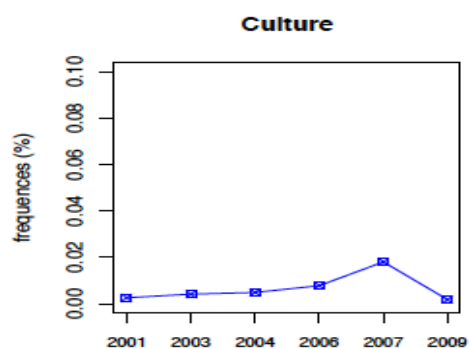
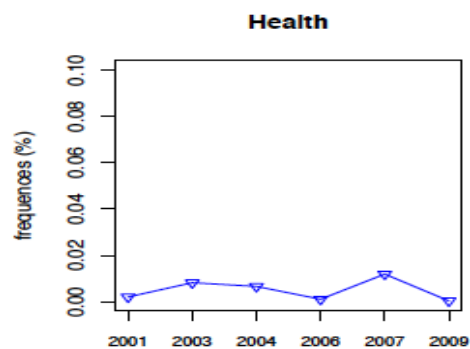
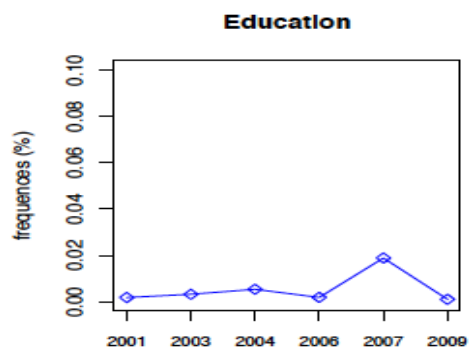
2003 regarding 'health' and in 2006 with reference to 'culture'. These specific categories, as observed earlier, generally cannot be considered as 'popular' by the party and have been underrepresented in the texts. As we have seen above, 'immigration' is an issue directly linked to 'nation and national identity' and in the same way there are links between 'culture', 'society and values' and 'religion', and also between 'Europe and EU' and 'general IR'. The party focuses on what considers the most important elements of its rhetoric: the country, the nation and its greatness, referencing its past and outstanding history, and constructs an argument around this approach. Along with that, Greek society, identified by principles and values like the family and religion, contributes to the structure of a general image/idea of what the Greek nation and Greek characteristics are, in an effort to present the greatness and superiority of the Greek people (see Chapter 4).

7.4.1.3. Outcomes

Looking back to the overall results of the content analysis of the texts of LA.O.S. another important factor that needs to be examined is their total word count. As can be observed in the 2004 and 2007 manifestos, the word count is much larger compared to the rest of the texts which are based on speeches. In 2007 especially, in comparison with the previous manifesto of 2004, the word length almost doubles. The party made a clearer and more concise statement of its ideology and identity in 2007, while the manifesto of 2004 can be taken as an introduction to what the party stands for. This can be explained again following the argument that LA.O.S. had a more limited, issue-oriented approach in 2004, something that changed in 2007 once the party started to gain more power but, perhaps more importantly, also started to change its strategy concerning specific approaches to issues that enriched its rhetoric. Attention has already been drawn to the fact that after the announcement of the manifesto of 2007, the document of 2004 was withdrawn by the official website of the party since it was seen as no longer reflecting the party principles and characteristics (see Chapter 4). As a general observation, there are numerous differences in most party manifestos in terms of length from one election to the next. In addition, the speeches could have been expected to have focused on a more limited range of issues.

Having said that, it is in 2007 that the party raises its voice on a variety of additional issues, concerning a wide spectrum of policies that in the past did not appear to figure much in the profile of the party. The increase in contribution by several categories in the 2007 text can be explained in various ways. The series of line graphs that follows presents a general visual representation of the frequencies in the selected categories in order to contribute to a further analysis. The horizontal axis details the year of presentation of the selected text and the vertical axis is the proportion of text provided by each of the categories.





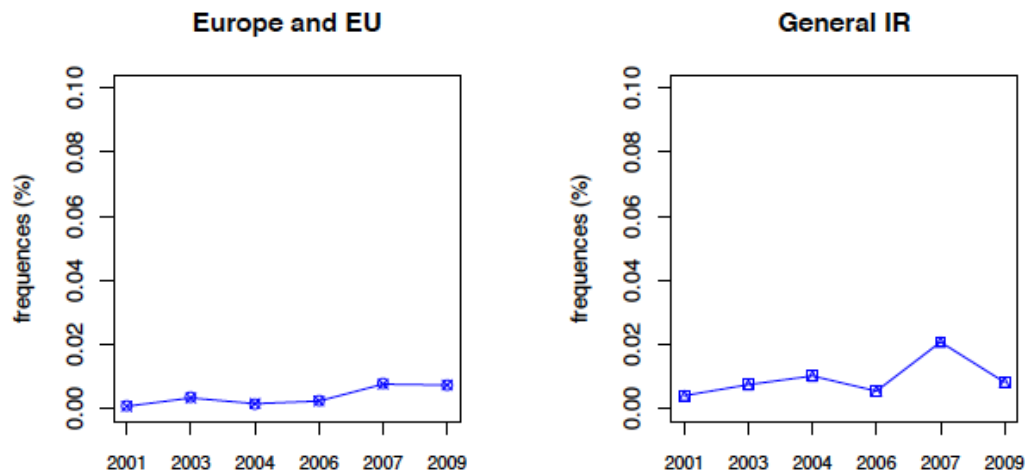


Figure 7:4: Graphs of salience of issues for LA.O.S., 2001-2009 (%)

Even a cursory look at the plots above reveals the nature of the manifesto of 2007. In 2007 LA.O.S. appears to make its rhetoric more strictly political. As mentioned above, this could be due to several reasons. The main one relates back to the EU elections of 2004. The LA.O.S. election results for this period demonstrated that the party was capable of entering the parliament at the next national elections by gaining the necessary percentage, but to do so, a change in its rhetoric had to take place. As seen in Chapter 4, LA.O.S. was until then linked to a form of radicalism and there were fascist individuals among its members. For that reason, in order to achieve a better electoral outcome, Karatzaferis realised that a more respectable image should be adopted. For this reason, although elements of welfare chauvinism, anti-immigration and nationalism remain, a more ‘politically correct’ form of communication was deployed, something that is reflected on the graphs above. Having said that, in 2007 there is the highest percentage of salience for the ‘politics and democracy’ category, reproducing once more the idea of a more legitimate profile for LA.O.S. In the effort to relinquish the radical and extreme characterisation, the document makes a declaration in favour of democracy and the democratic institutions at both national and international levels (see Chapter 4).

Secondly, there are several categories with low rates, compared to the rest, and this does not change throughout the documents. These categories are ‘religion’,

‘environment’, ‘immigration’ and, ‘Europe and EU’; for a party with strong religious and ethno-nationalist elements opposing the current form of the EU maybe we would expect that this would be reflected in the salience of the corresponding categories. Additionally, the first outcome of this analysis is the fact that there are several contradictions between what the party stands for and what the main focus is in the selected texts. Still, several questions have been raised with regard to the fact that the radical right ideology that contributes to the characterisation of LA.O.S. as a radical right party is not necessarily clear to the Greek people. In terms of the speeches, the anti-immigration ideology is not presented directly or in depth; nor is anti-Semitism and other similar elements that can be seen as fundamental to the party. In the leader’s speeches, as in the manifestos, the focus is on specific distinguishing categories and these are ‘politics and democracy’, ‘economy’, ‘nation and national identity’ and ‘society and values’.

Nevertheless, Figure 7:4 presents an overview of the party’s communication strategy based on the CATA of the selected texts, since a rather similar approach can be detected. LA.O.S. managed by 2007 to construct a political rhetoric that was developed since its foundation, and gain the popular support required to enter the parliament. Since the party’s foundation, its the main focus can be located in issues related to the categories of ‘politics and democracy’, ‘nation and national identity’ along with ‘society and values’, ‘law and security’, ‘economy’ and ‘development’ with the first three demonstrating a precedence over the rest. A more consistent approach can be observed in several categories, e.g ‘culture’, ‘religion’, ‘education’, ‘environment’, ‘immigration’ and ‘Europe and EU’ where the party communicates its message throughout the period under examination with similar salience. There are such cases as ‘economy’ and ‘law and security’ that there is no consistent pattern drawn from the data, but still these categories do appear to have a broader and more complex significance in the communication message of the party.

To conclude, based on the qualitative analysis of LA.O.S. in Chapter 4 concerning its characteristics, its ideology and the policies proposed by the party, one might have expected higher percentages of salience for some specific categories such as ‘immigration’ and ‘religion’, which the CATA did not support. Nevertheless, the need to propose a more legitimate and moderate image of a modern political party, in

an attempt to become attractive to a larger group of electors, is the priority of the party; as long as this includes emphasis on strong national identity and ethno-nationalism which provides the basis for the selection of both manifestos and the leader speeches.

7.4.2. SVP

7.4.2.1. Salience of categories in SVP documents

Switzerland, as presented in Chapter 5, is a country with strong links to its traditions and a heightened sense of direct democracy. The country has attracted a large number of foreigners since the early 1980s and by 2009 the proportion of foreigners accounted for 22.0% of the population (see bfs.admin.ch). In 1999 the political landscape of the country changed, and this year was also a turning point for SVP. In 1999 the party managed to become the strongest party in the country by gaining 22,5% of the vote and entered a new era of success. The turning point for SVP was brought about by a change in its communication strategy according to which it adopted a more radical and populist approach that focused particularly on anti-immigration and asylum policies.

Given that SVP declares faith in the traditional values of Switzerland, and participates in coalition governments, it seems difficult to place it in the radical right family. But it is Blocher's denunciation of federal policy concerning foreigners that has attracted a large share of the party's voters (see Chapter 5). SVP regards, its success as owing to successful communication strategies. But can this statement can be corroborated by results from this analysis? As seen in the previous case of LA.O.S., relevant data drawn from SVP's manifestos and leader's speeches are analysed in order to identify the image of the party's communication strategy .

By exploring the frequencies of the categories in the case of SVP, a general consistency regarding the salience of the data, especially in comparison to the case of LA.O.S., can be noted.

Categories	svp_1999	svp_2001	svp_2003	svp_2006	svp_2007	svp_2010
Politics and Democracy	188	29	79	70	954	15
Society and Values	308	15	39	26	392	10
Religion	3	1	1	4	39	1
Economy	276	18	22	15	616	3
Education	48	2	1	3	163	1
Health	49	6	11	9	145	1
Culture	120	3	5	8	212	1
Environment	113	1	3	9	224	1
Immigration	73	6	9	11	265	3
Nation and National Identity	194	17	38	41	902	16
Law and Security	141	6	12	16	469	9
Development	221	8	14	16	419	4
Europe and EU	18	2	1	2	44	1
General IR	27	5	4	3	114	2
words_in_text_(sum)	10848	1042	2105	1844	32900	524

Table 7:2a Frequences of categories in SVP documents

Categories	svp_1999	svp_2001	svp_2003	svp_2006	svp_2007	svp_2010
Politics and Democracy	1.73%	2.78%	3.75%	3.80%	2.90%	2.86%
Society and Values	2.84%	1.44%	1.85%	1.41%	1.19%	1.91%
Religion	0.03%	0.10%	0.05%	0.22%	0.12%	0.19%
Economy	2.54%	1.73%	1.05%	0.81%	1.87%	0.57%
Education	0.44%	0.19%	0.05%	0.16%	0.50%	0.19%
Health	0.45%	0.58%	0.52%	0.49%	0.44%	0.19%
Culture	1.11%	0.29%	0.24%	0.43%	0.64%	0.19%
Environment	1.04%	0.10%	0.14%	0.49%	0.68%	0.19%
Immigration	0.67%	0.58%	0.43%	0.60%	0.81%	0.57%
Nation and National Identity	1.79%	1.63%	1.81%	2.22%	2.74%	3.05%
Law and Security	1.30%	0.58%	0.57%	0.87%	1.43%	1.72%
Development	2.04%	0.77%	0.67%	0.87%	1.27%	0.76%
Europe and EU	0.17%	0.19%	0.05%	0.11%	0.13%	0.19%
General IR	0.25%	0.48%	0.19%	0.16%	0.35%	0.38%
words_in_text_(sum)	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 7:2b Proportions of categories in SVP documents

The data from 1999 and 2007 are drawn from the official manifestos of the party and the rest relate to speeches of the president of SVP within the period under scrutiny. In order to have a better picture of the salience of the categories that are being examined, plots have been created. Before continuing with the analysis, it should be pointed out that the manifestos of SVP include a variety of visual material, usually in the form of photographs, something that is not mirrored in the other cases. More detailed discussion on this will follow later in Chapter 8.

A first reflection on the frequencies presented in Tables 7:2a and b highlights several differences in terms of emphasis but, as in the case of LA.O.S., some categories are distinguished from the others, e.g. ‘politics and democracy’, ‘society and

values', 'economy' and 'nation and national identity'. As seen in Chapter 5, the main policy emphasises SVP's focus on foreign policy, immigration, welfare chauvinism and restriction on government influences. A lower level of salience concerns the category of 'religion'. The discussion about religion in SVP texts mainly focuses on the origins of the Swiss state, which according to the party was built on Christian foundations but generally the issue of Christianity does not appear to have a strong position in the party's rhetoric. Additionally, in the case of 'Europe and EU', where the numbers are lower in comparison to other categories, the explanation may lie in the party's general position on foreign policy. The party opposes the involvement of Switzerland in the EU, while the focus remains on the country itself, as the rhetoric of SVP emphasises the supremacy of Switzerland as a country and as a nation rather than the EU itself. This might also explain the high rates in the category of 'politics and democracy' and 'nation and national identity'. Throughout the texts of SVP there is a high exaltation of the Swiss political system and the country's position in the international political scene as a great example of economic and political sovereignty (see Chapter 5). This example relates to the statement at the beginning of this chapter that the categories can reflect one another. Most of the categories appear to be consistent over time, despite minor differences in some cases, e.g. 'health' and 'immigration'. A more comprehensive view of the frequencies will follow when examining the graphs of frequency of salience in the selected categories.

7.4.2.2. Comparing issue salience in the manifestos and leader's speeches of SVP

Similar to the case of LA.O.S., a comparison of the texts is carried out. More specifically, the manifestos of 1999 and 2007 are compared in order to track any changes in the written message of the party.

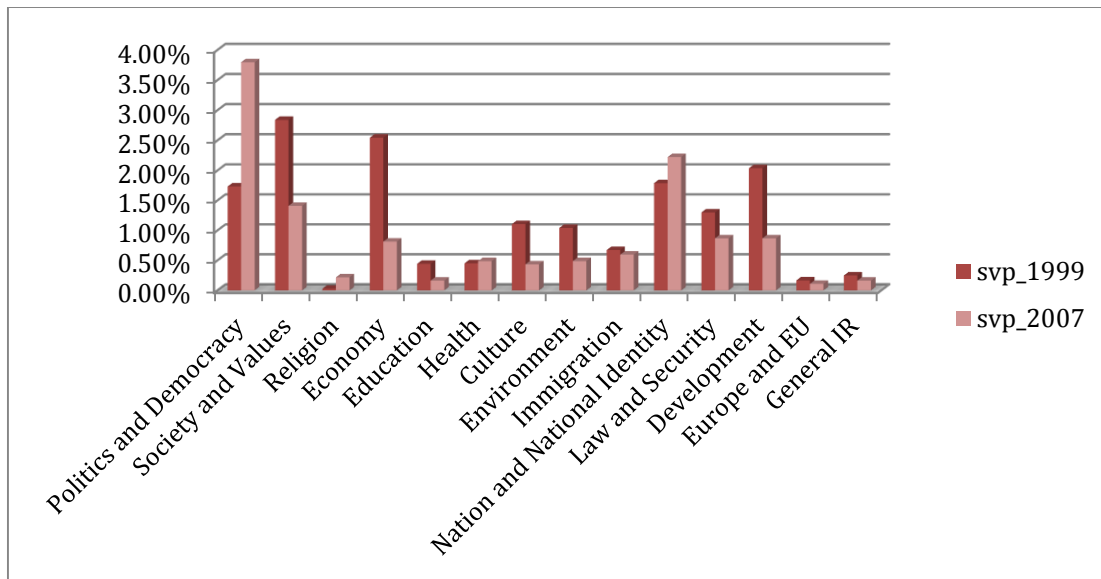


Figure 7:5 Comparing the manifestos (SVP) (%)

The comparison of the manifestos presents some significant differences between the two documents especially with regard to the categories of ‘politics and democracy’, ‘society and values’, ‘nation and national identity’ and ‘economy’. Although in 1999, a major focus was on ‘society and values’ and ‘economy’ (almost 3% and 2.5%, respectively) the image changes in 2007, when the focus moves toward ‘politics and democracy’ (2.9%) and nation and national identity (2.74%). In 1999 the party projects an image based on the traditions and values of Swiss society, driven by social prosperity and economic growth. By contrast, the 2007 manifesto is couched in more overtly political language emphasising party policies and support for the established federal party system in Switzerland, along with emphasis on national origins and the protection of the national identity of the country and society (see Chapter 5). The category of ‘nation and national identity’ is linked in terms of context with that of immigration, as in this case, similar to what was noted earlier in the analysis, this category can also be seen as an indirect signifier of issues regarding immigrants; ‘economy’, on the other hand, is a category that in the case of SVP refers basically to lower taxes and government spending. Additionally, the salience of ‘development’ in 1999 was around 2%, but reduced to 1.3% in the manifesto of 2007. In the majority of the rest of the categories the differences are minor, e.g. ‘culture’, ‘environment’ and ‘law and security’ that appear more frequently in the manifesto of 1999 than in that of 2007. Generally, in 1999 the manifesto presents a more homogenous image than the

one in 2007, where there is greater emphasis on ‘politics and democracy’, ‘society and values’ and ‘nation and national identity’ than on the rest of the categories.

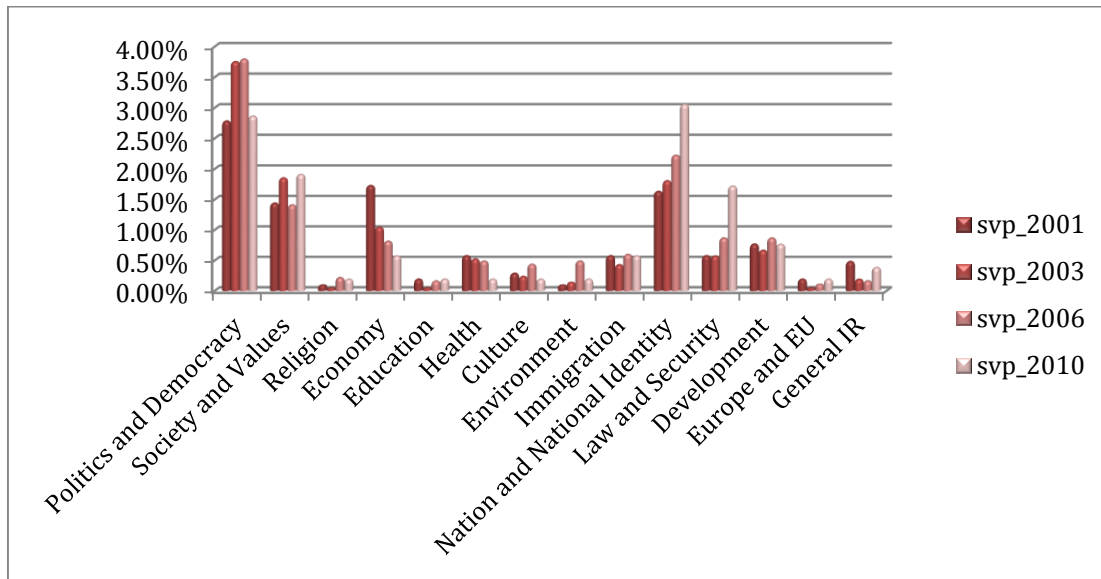


Figure 7:6 Salience of issues in Leader speeches 2001-2010 SVP (%)

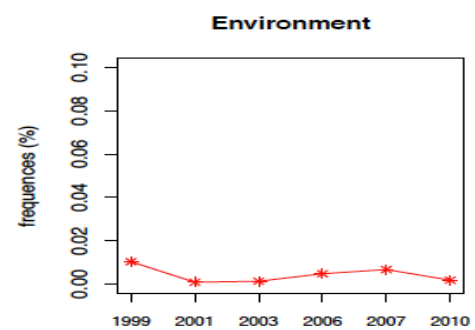
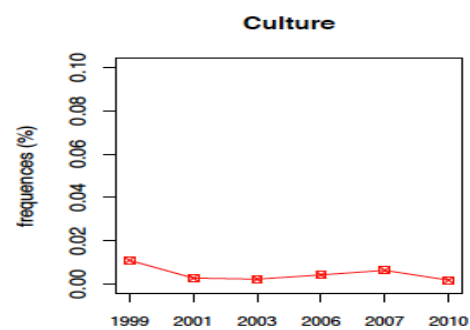
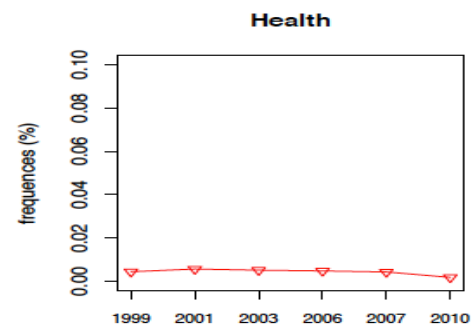
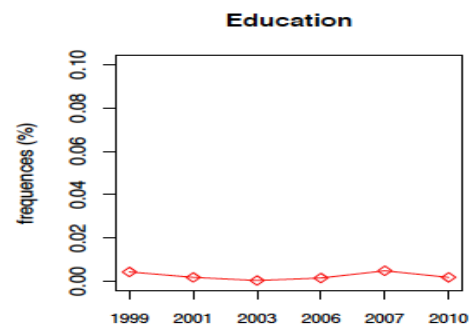
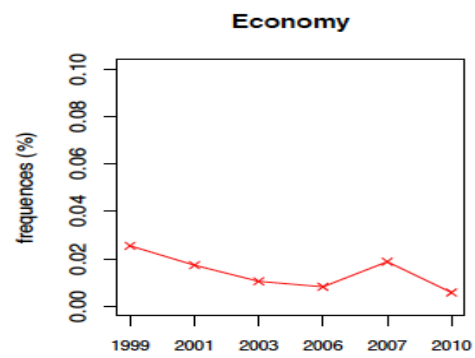
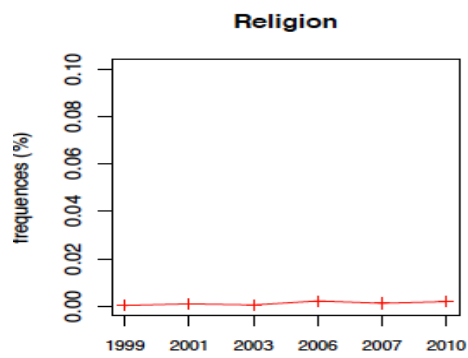
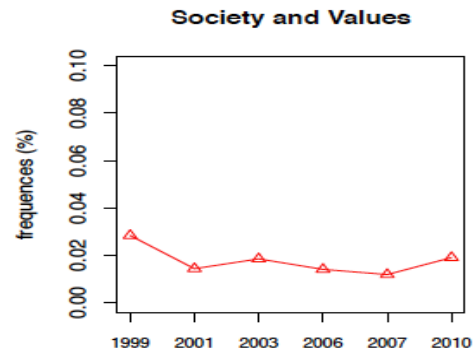
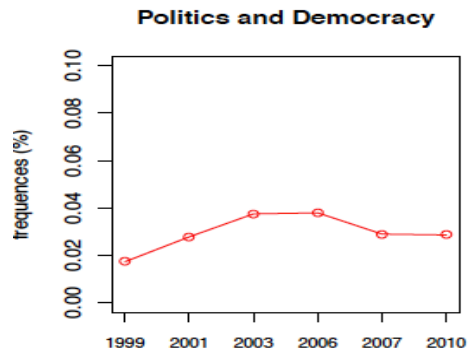
In Figure 7:6 the bar chart deals with the leader’s speeches in the period of 2001-2010. The chart highlights the salience of issues in these speeches and examines their similarities and differences. The peak in the salience of the ‘politics and democracy’ category occurs in 2003 and 2006 and represents a rise of almost 4% in both cases, followed by 3% for the ‘nation and national identity’ category in 2010. There are slight fluctuations in levels of salience for the categories of ‘society and values’, ‘economy’, ‘law and security’ and ‘general IR’, with the rest of the categories demonstrating a greater degree of stability, e.g. ‘health’, ‘religion’ ‘development’, ‘immigration’. Once more, the categories that stand out from the rest are the ones linked to the key ideological and policy positions of the party and contain issues that resonate with one another. As discussed in Chapter 5, SVP talks in favour of prosperity for the country by maintaining Switzerland’s unique political system and by maintaining the principles of sovereignty, direct democracy, the neutrality that characterise the country and its federal system, together with requests for tighter control of the national budget and lower taxes (see Chapter 5). ‘Law and security’ is an issue that appears quite often, especially after 2007, the year in which the black sheep campaign was launched. One of the major approaches in this area concerns immigrants, who are depicted as criminals; for this reason the party proposes that

necessary measures need to be taken, in order to create a safer and more secure environment for Swiss citizens (see Chapter 5).

After 2007, and the infamous black sheep campaign, SVP becomes more radical in its communication rhetoric, especially concerning immigration policies, protection of the national element, and law and order issues. Immigrants are considered to be the major cause of crime in the country. Bearing this in mind, the party starts linking, in a more radical way, the issue of violence and crime with the immigration issue. In addition, the party starts targeting immigrants, making specific references to the Muslims and raising the matter of minarets, all in the name of national prosperity and protection of Swiss identity, tradition and culture. Based on this argument, in a similar way to LA.O.S., SVP addresses the issue of immigration both directly and indirectly. By referring to welfare chauvinism and asylum policies, the party promotes the values and principles that illustrate the distinctive case of Switzerland. This observation raises questions about the form of communication strategies of SVP that the thesis is addressing and will be one of the foci in Chapter 8.

7.4.2.3. Outcomes

In the case of SVP a compelling comparison between ideology and communication message can be identified. During the period under scrutiny the rhetoric of SVP regarding such issues as immigration and welfare chauvinism developed a specifically radical character, comparable to those of other European radical right parties, which has been reflected in the communication strategies of the party since the late 1990s. The fact that the SVP has a long history of activity in the national political arena has allowed it to develop a clearer political message. This is reflected in the graphs in Figure 7:7 below. The first impression after analysing these is an image of stability across the years and a firm communication approach that is reflected also in the salience of preference patterns. More specifically, there are some minor exceptions, fluctuations that can be detected in the categories of ‘politics and democracy’, ‘society and values’, ‘economy’ and ‘development’. In addition, in the category of ‘nation and national identity’ there is a clear trend of increasing saliences.



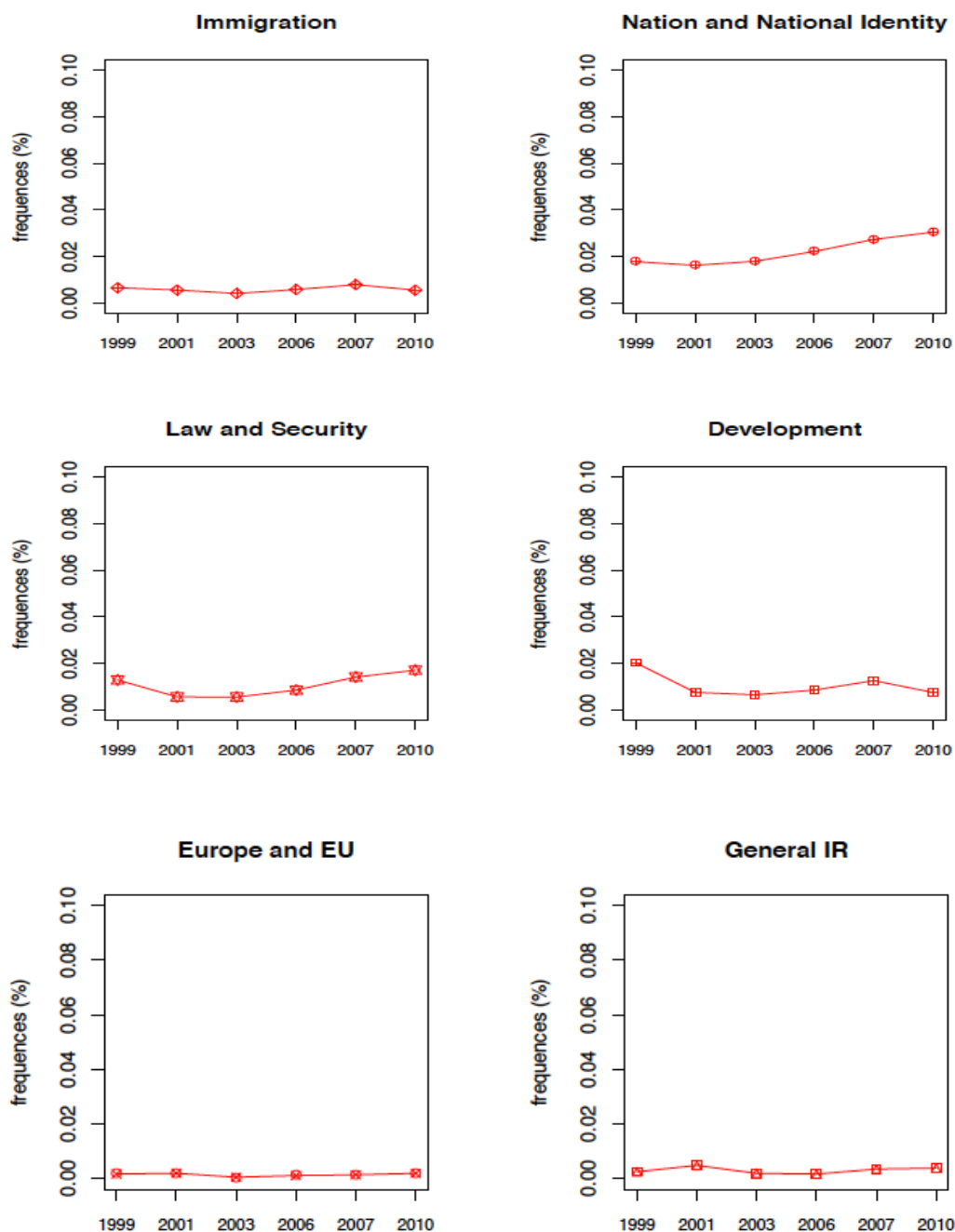


Figure 7:7: Graphs of salience of frequencies in categories for SVP (%)

The general impression gained from the texts of SVP reflects the roots of the party. Originating in 1971 the party remained active in the political scene, and managed to gain the support of the electorate in 1999 when the SVP achieved 22.5% of the votes (see Chapter 5). According to the party, this electoral success was based on the fact that it managed to address issues it considered important in a consistent way, e.g. neutrality, personal responsibility, and lower taxes. The SVP was not a newly-

formed party, like LA.O.S for instance, and its policies and focus seem to be more clearly defined. From the salience levels depicted above, the party follows a consistent approach relating to the communication concerning the selected issues and presents a comparatively similar level of significance over time.

In relation to what was mentioned above, ‘politics and democracy’ and ‘nation and national identity’ are the issues with the highest salience among the selected texts and, thus, can help explain the positions of SVP in Switzerland’s federal political system. Along with the underlining of the Swiss values and the importance of the nation for the Swiss political culture, ‘society and values’ should be regarded in conjunction with these two significant categories in terms of salience. In a similar way to LA.O.S., the ‘immigration’ category does not appear to suggest a high level of salience, although SVP’s position on immigration and asylum is well known. Again this can be explained in the way the message is communicated. The focus remains on the Swiss nation and the national identity of the country, in terms of an ethno-nationalism; under this wide perspective numerous policies and issues are being approached in a non-direct way.

7.4.3. AN

7.4.3.1. Salience of frequencies in the manifestos of AN

The final party that is being examined is the AN. The extent of the data is limited in comparison with the other two case studies, as Italy is included only as a secondary case study. The texts examined are the two official party manifestos of 1995 and 2001. Although 1995 is beyond the boundaries of the time frame for this project, the fact that the party adopted its 1995 manifesto for 2001 validates its use in the analysis. Another factor that needs to be underlined is the absence of an official party manifesto for the AN alone after 2001. This can be explained by the fact that AN became a permanent member of the CID and later merged into the PdL in 2009. It is in 1995 that the party created a new identity, leaving behind its fascist roots and moved away from its position of isolation as a pariah. Rather, it has developed as a reliable ally of FI. Under this new image AN, is no longer just the successor to MSI, but projects itself as a dynamic force in the mainstream Italian political arena, following the traditional values

of Italian society and the religious faith of the Roman Catholic Church. The frequencies of the categories demonstrate considerable similarity between the two documents as they present a high rate of stability. Having said that, the communication strategy appears to be maintained at the same level settled back in 1995.

Categories	an_1995	an_2001	an_1995	an_2001
Politics and Democracy	1107	50	2.76%	2.61%
Society and Values	564	25	1.41%	1.30%
Religion	45	3	0.11%	0.16%
Economy	523	49	1.30%	2.56%
Education	139	13	0.35%	0.68%
Health	62	9	0.15%	0.47%
Culture	242	7	0.60%	0.37%
Environment	142	5	0.35%	0.26%
Immigration	65	14	0.16%	0.73%
Nation and National Identity	437	19	1.09%	0.99%
Law and Security	458	33	1.14%	1.72%
Development	432	39	1.08%	2.04%
Europe and EU	90	5	0.22%	0.26%
General IR	227	3	0.57%	0.16%
words_in_text_(sum)	40096	1916	100.00%	100.00%

Table 7:3: Frequencies and proportions of categories for AN documents

The table above (Table 7:3) presents both the raw frequencies and proportions of salience levels for the categories. The salience levels show some differences between the two texts. For the category of ‘economy’ there is almost a doubling in emphasis from 1995 to 2001 something that is similarly observed in the case of ‘development’. A significant increase can also be found for other categories such as ‘immigration’, ‘education’ and ‘health’. In the case of AN, as in the cases of LA.O.S. and SVP, the category of ‘politics and democracy’ is the most popular of all. The pattern is different however with regard to ‘society and values’, ‘economy’, ‘law and security’ and ‘development’.

A quick explanation would be that AN, in 1995, created a specific profile that was successful enough to bring the party electoral success and to maintain it in the years that followed. The basic characteristics of the party remain the same along with its rhetoric.

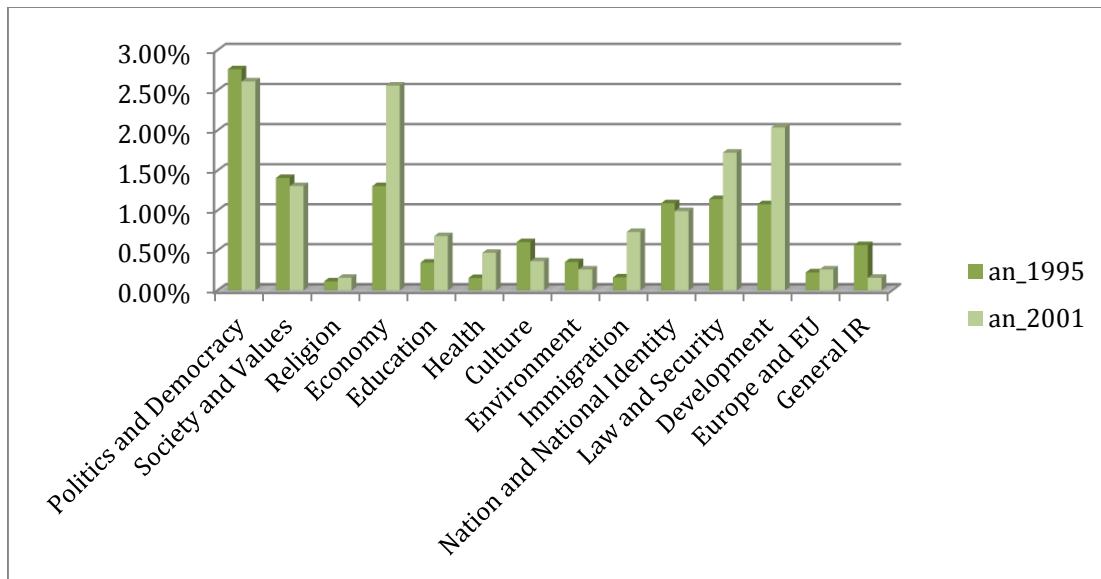


Figure 7:8 Comparing the manifestos of AN (%)

Similar to the cases of LA.O.S.. and SVP, ‘politics and democracy’ is the key category in the case of AN. With the need to regularly reassure the public of its democratic credentials and its rejection of its fascist past, the fact that this is the most salient factor is understandable (2.76% in 1995 and 2.61% in 2001). Following is the category of ‘economy’ with 1.3% in 1995 and 2.56% in 2001 along with ‘development’ with, 1.8% in 1995 and 2.4 % in 2001 which reflects the official position of the party in which it favours of a market economy based on a neo liberal approach. Moreover, AN’s views on national coherence, national identity and patriotism can be found in the ‘nation and national identity’ category, measuring 1.09% in 1995 and 0.99% in 2001. Along with that, there is an increase in the salience of the immigration category from 0.16% in 1995 to 0.73% in 2001. The low levels for the immigration category can be explained by the fact that AN is not particularly associated with radical projection of anti-immigration politics in comparison with other prominent radical right parties in Europe.

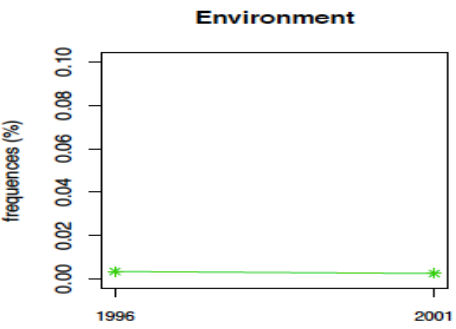
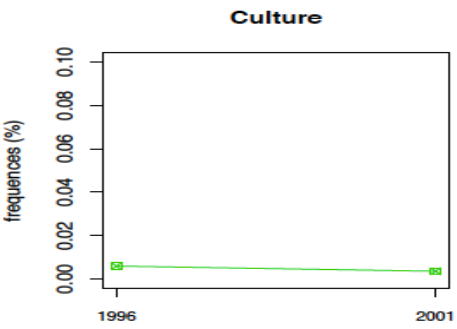
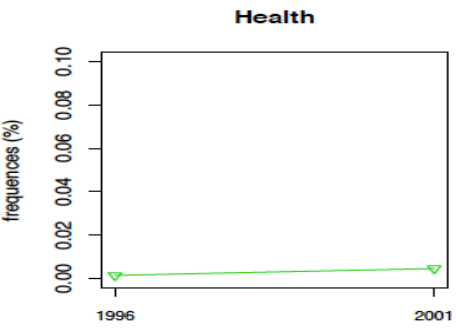
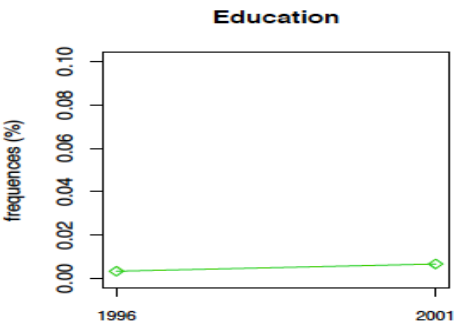
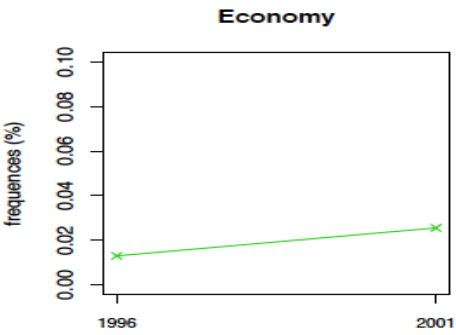
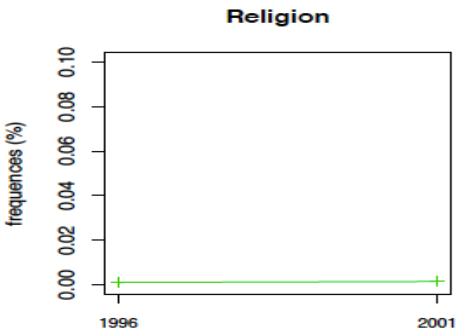
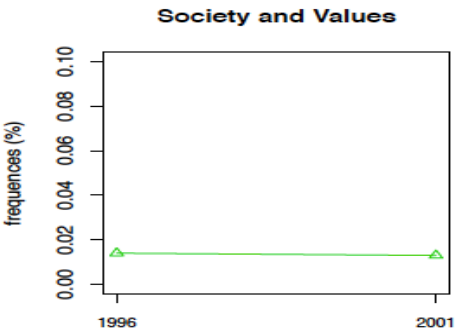
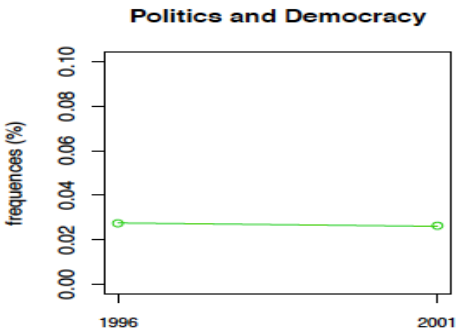
7.4.3.2. Outcomes

From its foundation AN was trying to prove that, as a party which locates itself in the fundamental values set out in the Italian constitution, left behind its historical connection with MSI and its fascist past. In its effort to do so, the party attempted to address programmes and ideas that presented a new phase of progress towards more

liberal policies similar to other radical right parties in Europe (see Chapter 6). When examining the manifestos of the party, attention should be paid to the time the manifestos were presented along with the evolution of the political presence of AN in the national scene. As stated before (see Chapter 3), although 1995 is not in the time frame of this project, the manifesto of that year is essential in order to understand the nature of the party. The next document replacing the manifesto of 1995 came in 2001. The difference word length should be underlined, for it is similar to LA.O.S. The document of 1995 seems to include all the necessary elements of a party manifesto created to present a broad image of the political party, its ideology and its policies. Since 1995, the party has participated successfully in national elections, but has also become member of the wider coalition of CdL (see Chapter 6). Figure 7:9 below, presents a clearer idea of the AN communication strategy, while comparing the changes between the two texts.

The AN manifesto of 1995 presents the new identity of the party and this can be assumed to be one of the main opportunities for AN to use for proposing and presenting itself as a well-structured party that highlights its values and ideas clearly, while asking for the support of the electorate. Having made this clear, the manifesto of 2001 does not appear to differ significantly from the one in 1995, something that could lead to a speculation that the focus of the party did not change during the intervening years. ‘Politics and democracy’ remains the priority issue for AN, rooted in the internal effort of the party to distance itself from MSI and present a more respectable image of a democratic party of the Italian right, promoting federalism, ~~and~~ a presidential system and plurality voting system. ‘Economy’ and ‘development’ reflect the party’s focus on liberal market promoting the privatisation of the state industries, policies that the party appears to follow intensively. ‘Nation and national identity’ along with ‘society and values’, and ‘law and security’, are linked to the traditional values of Italian society that the party supports, in addition to stricter security measures to control immigration and a call for harsher penalties for criminals (see Chapter 6). Although the party’s official position is close to the Christian values of the Roman Catholic Church, ‘religion’ does not produce high rates of saliences, nor does ‘Europe and EU’. ‘Immigration’ is one of the categories that seem to grow in importance between the years, although manifesting only a low level of salience along with ‘education’. Finally, apart from the categories already mentioned, the rest reflect similar levels of

salience in both of the manifestos, supporting the ideology and policies of the party in terms of issue orientation.



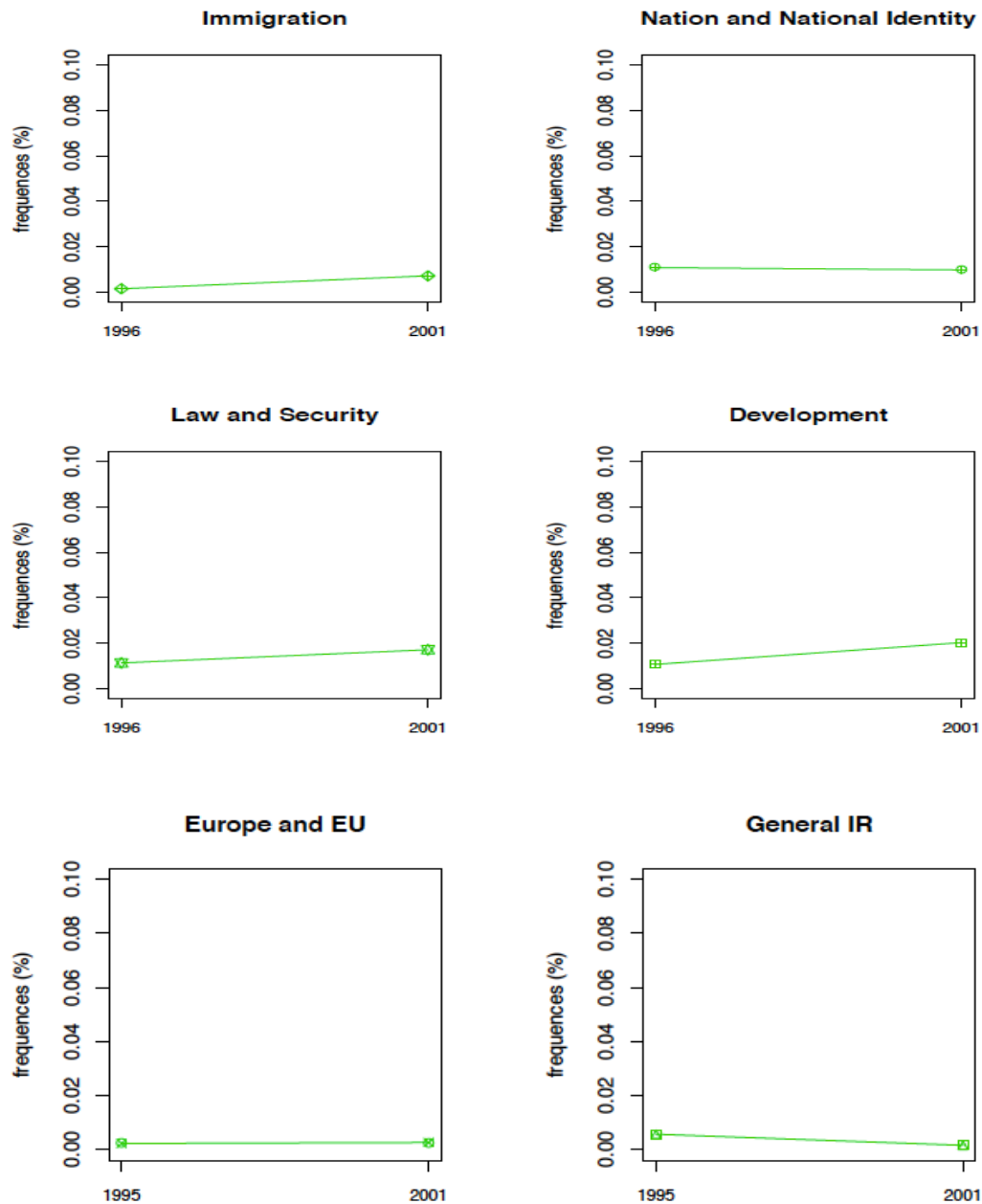


Figure 7:9: Graphs of salience of frequencies in categories for AN (%)

Following this examination of the individual cases, a comparison between the cases is undertaken, using similar box plots to demonstrate similarities and differences. This direct comparison of salience contributes to an identification of the focus of the parties as members of the radical right family, and also serves to support the argument concerning the role of political marketing in the strategies of the three parties.

7.5. Comparing the content

In order to build a case concerning the communication strategy of radical right parties, three separate cases were selected. The comparison between these cases is essential, so that any similarities or differences in the way the political parties choose to communicate with the electorate through their textual and oral rhetoric can be identified. It is this rhetoric that is being examined in order to lead to conclusions concerning a general communication profile for the parties. The analysis now moves to consider the frequencies of certain categories, as discussed in Chapter 3, in order to underline a focus on saliences which inform the classification of the parties' strategies. As seen in the previous sections of this chapter, several differences were noted while examining each individual case study. In order to visualise these changes graphs have been created where the changes in terms of issue salience within the documents are presented in stacked marked lines. Each line denotes a different category. The data have been analysed in the same chronological order as above.

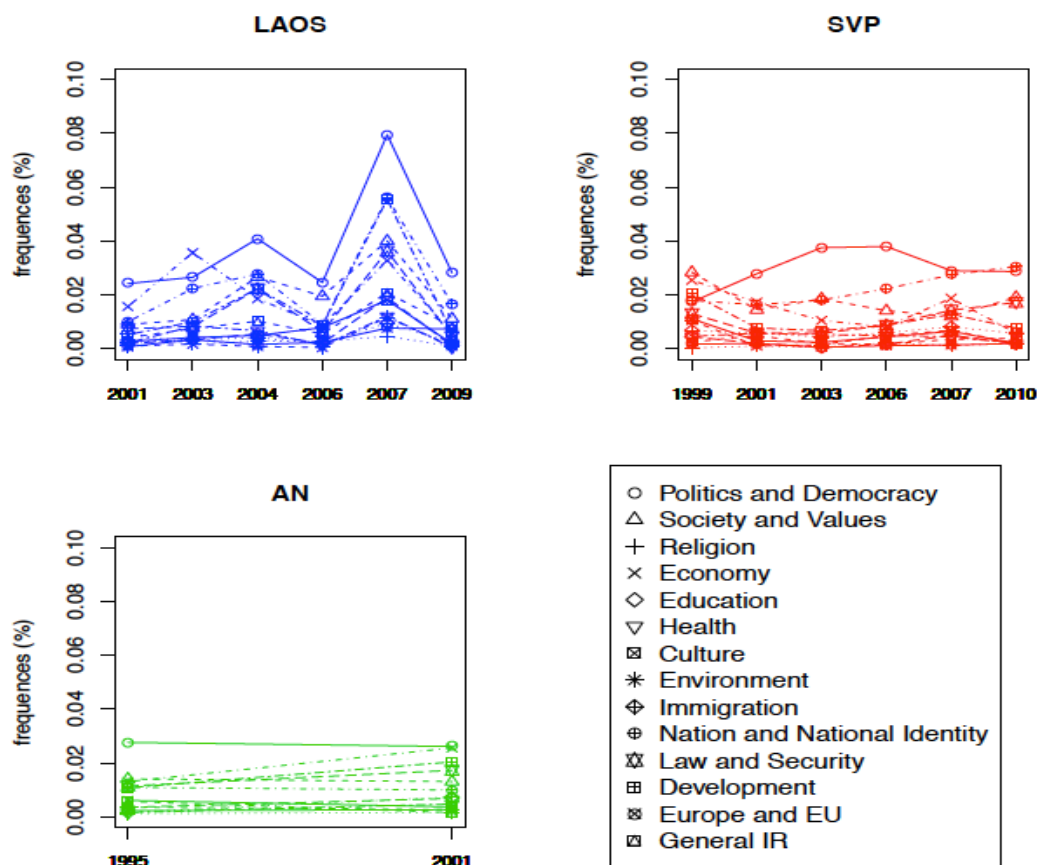
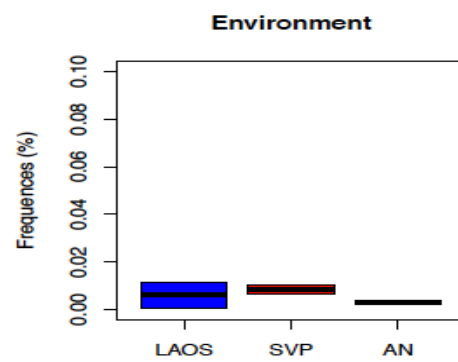
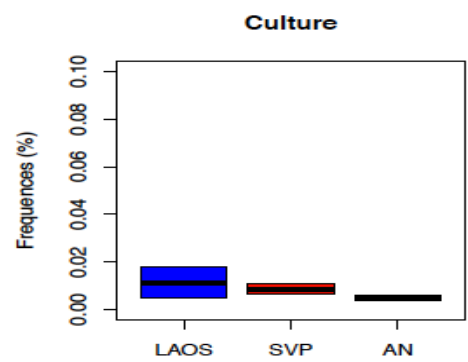
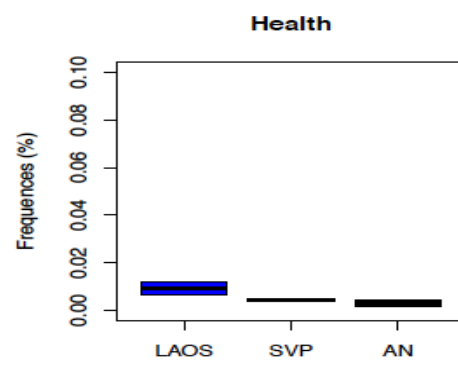
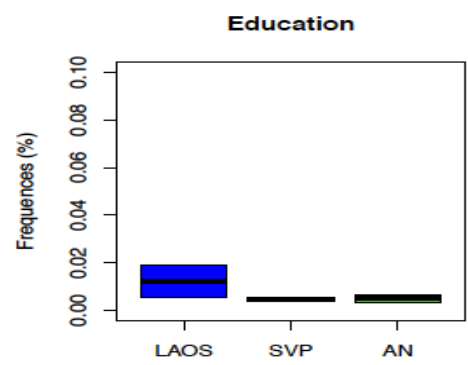
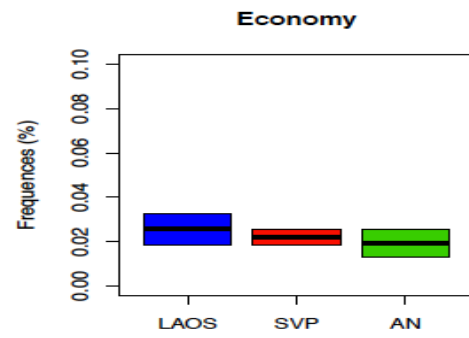
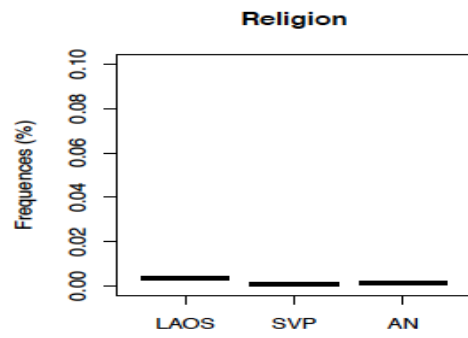
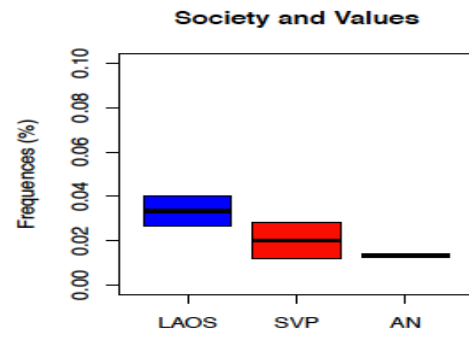
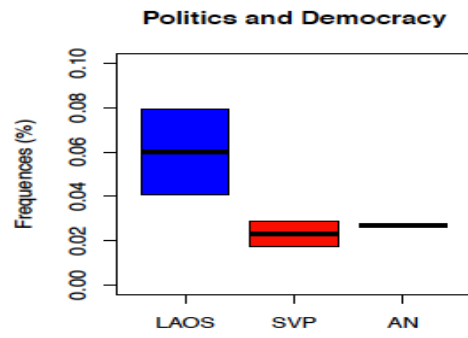


Figure 7:10 Graphs of salience of issues for LA.O.S., SVP and AN (%)

These graphs summarise the observations made in the previous parts of this chapter. The horizontal axis, represents the years of the presentation of the texts (manifestos and speeches) and the vertical axis, the percentage references to categories. The purpose is to compare patterns of salience in the communication strategy of the parties during the years under consideration. In the case of LA.O.S. salience is quite variable and somewhat volatile in the case of the most salient issues, especially in terms of the category of ‘politics and democracy’.

The SVP also shows a degree of variability, but to a much lesser extent and earlier in the decade. Again, ‘politics and democracy’ is both the most salient and the most likely to vary in the intensity of this saliency. The other issues do not demonstrate much movement in terms of the importance placed on them in the different documents. AN clearly presents a stable pattern in terms of issue salience for all categories. Of course, since only two texts were used, only dramatic differences would appear. Nevertheless, it is clear that some issues were more salient than others.

But what does the comparison show? Can we identify any relationship between the three cases in terms of how far they differ in their communication message? The following figure (Figure 7:10) offers a clearer picture. The ‘box’ in the box-and-whisker plot represents the average of the data points of the frequencies. Having said that, the horizontal axis refers to the party and the vertical one the percentage of the frequencies.



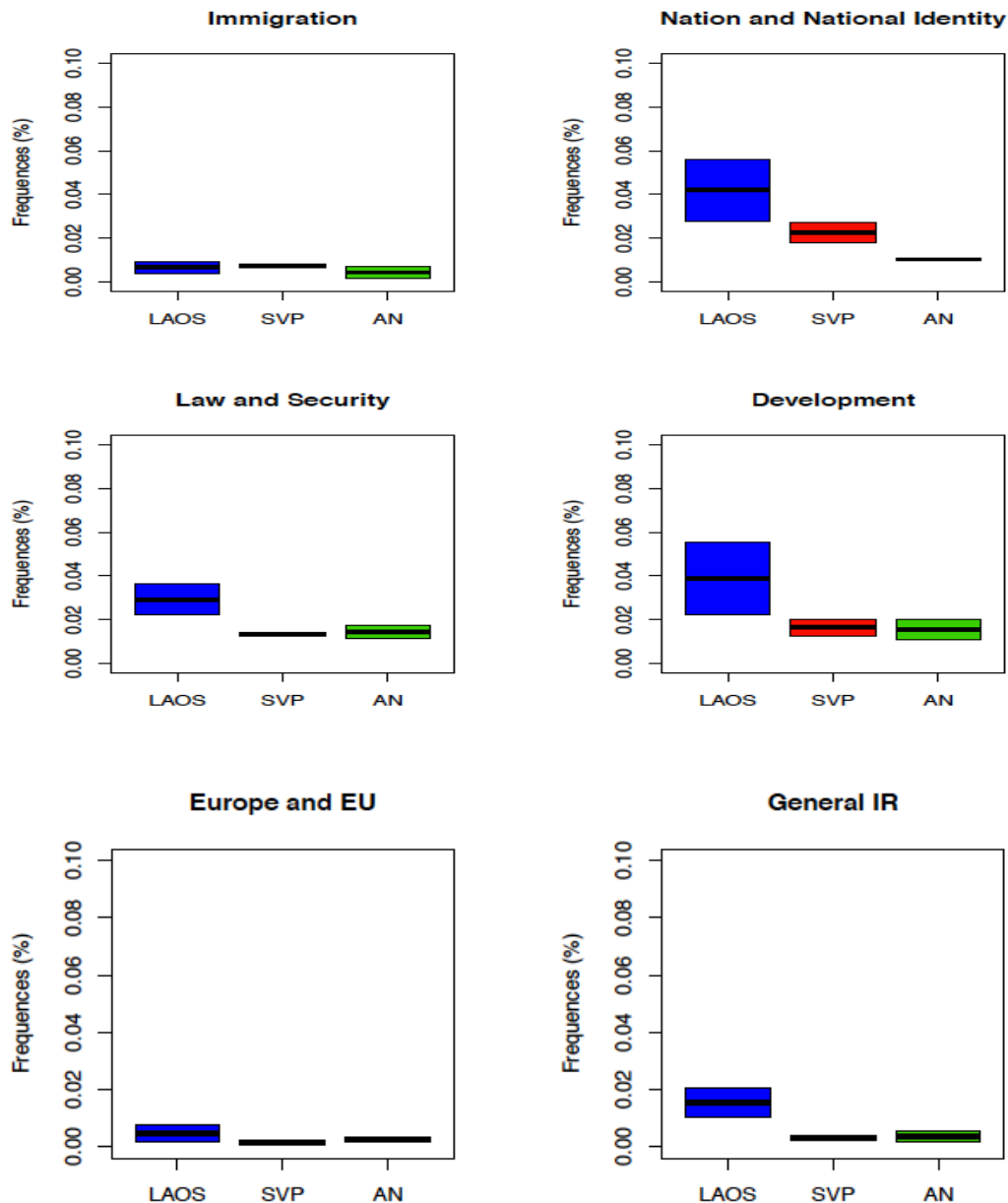


Figure 7:11 Comparing boxplots for LA.O.S.,-SVP and-AN (mean percentages)

Interestingly the figure above presents several similarities among the three cases. The black line represents the average proportion for each category. Seven out of fourteen categories appear to have related frequencies in all three cases. The main differences are to be found in relation to the categories of ‘politics and democracy’, ‘society and values’, ‘economy’, ‘nation and national identity’, ‘law and security’ and finally ‘development’. These are, after all, the categories with the higher percentages of preference over time and the changes occur in a similar pattern with only minor differences.

The average proportion of the categories presents a slightly different and more detailed impression of their salience. ‘Politics and democracy’ even in the average rate is the most popular category among all, though the frequency changes in each party. LA.O.S. signifies the highest percentage (almost 6%) followed by AN (less than 3%) and SVP (less than 2.5%). In the case of LA.O.S. the box plot is comparatively tall, something that indicates that there are differences among texts concerning this category. On the contrast, in the case of SVP the box is comparatively short, which implies that there is a level of agreement within the texts. Finally, in the case of AN, the agreement within the texts is almost identical, since the median line does not highlight any differences. Similar images occur for ‘nation and national identity’ and ‘society and values’ categories. Concerning the first, again LA.O.S. gets the higher rate among the parties (around 4%) followed by SVP (more than 2%) and AN (around 1.5%). Once more, there are clear differences among the texts in the LA.O.S. case, minor ones in the SVP case, and almost no differences for AN. In the case of ‘society and values’ the differences in the case of SVP comparable to those of the other parties are yet the average for LA.O.S. is higher than for both SVP and AN, with the latter, presenting greater stability over time. In addition, for the ‘law and security’ category, LA.O.S.’s texts demonstrate more consistence than those of the other parties. AN is moderately consistent and SVP less so.

‘Economy’ and ‘development’ are the next two categories which present some similarities. In the first the impression of a comparable approach the average proportion within the parties is close (around 2%). In this category, all three parties show only small differences between their texts. On the other hand, for the ‘the development’ category LA.O.S. (with almost 4%) highlights greater differences in terms of salience than the other parties where the average, for SVP and AN is below 2%. ‘Education’, ‘health’, ‘culture’, ‘Europe and EU’ and ‘General IR’ present only minor differences between the parties. In some of the cases, the average line of LA.O.S. is above the ones of SVP and AN, e.g. ‘general IR’ and ‘education’, but in most of the cases the average rates are close in numbers. Finally, in the case of the ‘religion’ category, there are almost none of the differences among the texts and the proportions are equally low for all the parties.

Another general observation regarding these box plots relates to the significant deviations noted in the LA.O.S. texts, in comparison with a more homogenous image for the texts of SVP and AN. The consistency in the cases of SVP and AN point to a more stable and clear approach to policies and issues related to the categories, something that in the case of LA.O.S. cannot be substantiated. This can be explained by the fact that LA.O.S., since it was a newly-formed party, had not decided on an official party line at the time of its formation, and for several years the party was in a quandary about its identity (see Chapter 4). The historical past of SVP and AN contributed to the creation of a more gradual approach that was followed throughout the years under consideration. In addition, controversies are associated with the way the parties communicate their message to the electorate, e.g. concerning immigration, which is an aspect that will be taken up in the chapter that follows.

7.6. Conclusion

What can be drawn from the box plots above is that the three parties do adopt a similar approach, especially regarding issues relating to the ‘politics and democracy’ and ‘nation and national identity’ categories. These two categories, for the reasons discussed in relation to the analysis of the three parties separately in the previous parts of this chapter, are treated as the major foci both in the manifestos and leader’s speeches, despite their different average salience rates. Other categories important for all parties are ‘society and values’, ‘economy’, ‘law and security’ and ‘development’. Hence, the CATAs help to identify a similar profile of communication strategy for the three parties.

The importance of the categories reflects the policy and priorities the parties set in their official documents, i.e. the manifestos and the leader’s speeches. The priority mirrored in the salience of proportions and the results of the comparative analysis also reflect the way the political parties communicate with the electorate. Their chosen foci set the line where policies become strategies and where the communication of these policies reflects their marketing techniques. The semantic correspondence between the three cases can justify an argument in favour of a common communication strategy in terms of official manifestos and leader’s speeches. But are there any other variables that can attribute to the analysis? In the next chapter the discussion picks up key

aspects regarding political marketing and branding and the characterisation of radical right parties (LA.O.S., SVP and AN) will be related to results from the CATA, along with the contribution of images, the leadership figures and the qualitative analysis from chapters 4, 5 and 6. In this way the main arguments of the hypothesis regarding similar patterns of communication strategy will be substantiated.

8. Reflections on the analysis: Communication strategies and radical right parties

8.1. Introduction

In this chapter the emphasis is placed on reprising the discussion of the material in the previous chapters in order to assess how the research fits into the general development in the area of communication tactics. The observations and outcomes from the case-studies (Chapters 4, 5 and 6) along with the theory of political communication, political marketing and branding and the identification of the radical right party family (Chapter 2) and the results of the CATA (Chapter 7) are combined in order to address the research questions proposed in the introductory chapter (Chapter 1) and reflect on the hypothesis of this thesis.

The discussion will start with the re-statement of the research questions, reprise the theory presented in Chapter 2, and discuss the results of the qualitative analysis and the CATA of LA.O.S, SVP and AN, in order to support the argument on communication strategies of radical right parties.

8.2. Research questions and hypothesis

The hypothesis of this thesis examines the potential for a common pattern of communication strategies of radical right parties in Western Europe. The thesis has set out to answer questions linked to communication techniques of radical right politics on the basis of three case studies, and to draw conclusions through their comparative analysis. Ultimately, it contributes to a better understanding of the emphasis that these parties place on their prioritised issues, and how these contribute to the way they choose to communicate with the public. How do LA.O.S., SVP and AN choose to present themselves to the electorate? What are the communication techniques that they use? How can we distinguish between brand and image? And, is there a pattern to follow in order to run a successful political campaign, which might serve as an example for other political parties of the radical right?

8.3. Reflections on communicating politics

The focus of this thesis is based on the assumption that political parties use as part of their communication techniques marketing and branding strategies, in order to achieve their political goals and increase their presence in their national political arenas. Furthermore, it is proposed that parties use a series of techniques which can be 'deployed in competitive situations to construct and reinforce a political entity's image, products and persons' (Osuagwu, 2008;800). Taking into consideration that marketing is increasingly being adopted by political parties, and that this is 'moving beyond influencing only tactical matters of communication and presentation, towards playing a significant role in policy formulation and long-term direction' (Butler and Collins (1996) in Moufahim, 2007:260).

Kotler (1982) claims that the marketing of politics will exist no matter what the particular methods are used. Nevertheless, O'Shaughnessy asserts that marketing strategies are clearly being adopted in modern politics and suggests that candidates appear to work on 'formulating a look and behaviour that match the target voters' perceptions and needs'; however, voters 'are in need of a certain political character at a given time who will champion their hopes and assuage their fears' (1990:4-5). Having said that, the focus of this research is on parties from a distinct political family and the electioneering aspects of marketing and branding strategies they employ. Political marketing and branding are thus examined as a part of the communication approach used in order to attract the attention of voters and to persuade them to support the party by entrusting it with their vote.

During the period under examination (2000-2010), the electorate is exposed to numerous information from the political parties. This information takes the form of electoral advertising campaigns, for example or help for the electorate to familiarise themselves with the parties' slogans and to associate themselves with recognisable symbols used by the party. This can be considered as evidence of a particular approach to political communication. Or, in other words, as Henneberg describes it, the means these specific parties choose in order to communicate with the electorate and the way that their candidates 'adopt a populist 'follower' mentality, contributing to the disenchantment of the electorate and a resulting cynicism regarding politics in general'

(2002:7).

Following the concepts of commercial marketing theory, O'Shaughnessy, among others, suggests that the techniques adopted by the parties do not only reflect the product on offer, but actively contribute to the creation of the party's image (see Lees-Marshment, 2004; Maarek 1995). Political marketing theory, therefore, focuses on the notion that brand images are composed on the basis of individual elements that contribute to the understanding of voters' likes and dislikes regarding a specific political candidate or political party (see Newman 1999a; 1999b; Lees-Marshment 2004; Lees-Marshment and Lilleker 2005). Needham (2005) listed several criteria for successful brands adding to the creation of a trusting relationship between product and consumer. 'Brands act as simplifiers, are reassuring, credible and evoke a positive vision of a better way of life' (De Landtsheer and De Vries, 2012); for Needham (2005) it is the brands that add to the creation of a trusting relationship between the product and the consumer.

In the following pages a discussion takes place on how the thesis has addressed the research questions through content analysis. This approach contributes to the identification and understanding of communication techniques, which parties have used in order to present their ideology, policies and image to a market-oriented electorate.

8.4. The communication approaches of radical right parties

8.4.1. Developing market-oriented theory perspective for party politics

In political communication theory, communication can take many forms, e.g. media, political marketing, political branding, and is being used during the effort of political parties to gain power and attract the attention of the electorate (see Mc Nair, 1995). It is through these communication techniques that the image of the party is constructed. The constructed image will follow the party and become a point of reference for the voters. Political parties have exploited political communication approaches within the last decades, and their practices have developed as a growing subject of research in political science.

In their effort to gain the attention of the voters/audience/electorate, and eventually to earn their support, what most influences the appearance of parties in terms of strategic communication is the consumption of the product they offer (Chapter 2). The market-orientation approach is featured in the variety of messages found in their ideology, in their rhetoric in official manifestos and speeches and in the images they choose to expose (Chapters 4, 5 and 6). Although marketing itself is not mentioned directly anywhere in official party materials, the aim of this thesis has been to identify the elements that justify the characterisation of the parties as market-oriented organisations. An example of this is the use of anti-immigration campaigns and policies. Anti-immigration, apart from being part of radical right parties' ideology and policy, can also be seen as a characteristic brand for them. Reflecting on branding theory, a brand can influence the voters' perception and motivate sentiments like trust, reliability, respect, and fear. In this specific case, the radical right parties try to invoke negative attitudes by means of particular types of marketing, and their communication strategy emphasises the negativity of that sentiment. Additionally, the parties calculate thoroughly the way they manage their image and political strategy. LA.O.S., SVP and AN have been criticised over the years for their radical views on issues concerning immigration, asylum seekers and party systems, along with condemnation of their origins being linked to fascism (see Chapter 2). It is for this reason that the parties seek to change their approach to connecting with the electorate, while adopting a more sophisticated language in order to communicate their message. It is important, however, to reiterate that political parties might not perceive the concepts of political marketing and branding in the same way as political scientists. Bearing this in mind, questioning these concepts is still a contested area within political science, but engaging critically with these approaches will lead to a better understanding of the communication strategies of political parties.

There are several critical approaches since the late 1990s with regard to how political communication, including techniques associated with political marketing and branding, has been embraced by political parties in terms of candidates and policies (Needham 2005; Scammell, 2007; Newman, 1994; Lilleker and Lees-Marshment, 2005). Moreover, several scholars have approached the issue directly in relation to radical right parties. Among others, Moufahim (2007) in the case of *Vlaams Blok*, Wal

(2010) in the case of AN on immigration, Van Der Valk (2003) on right-wing discourse on immigration in France, have used approaches based on discourse analysis. Content analysis has been recently used in order to examine the presence of radical right on the Internet (see Caiani and Parenti, 2013; Tateo, 2006) and Rooduijn and Pauwels (2011) on measuring populism in the manifestos of parties in the UK, Netherlands, Germany and Italy.

In relation to this thesis, LA.O.S, SVP and AN, have managed to establish themselves in their respective national political arenas during the period 2000-2010 by adopting communication strategies that can be explained and analysed in more depth in relation to marketing and branding. Hence, well-organised electoral campaigns, websites, newspapers, and TV channels can be considered as specific components of a general communication technique which has contributed to each party's success and increased popularity. However, a content analysis of the manifestos, regarding this political party family was yet to be explored. Responding to this gap in the literature, the purpose of this thesis has been to use CATA as a tool in order to identify patterns in communication approaches of these parties and relate them to the key concepts of political communication theory. Having said that, it also offers an alternative way of examining political parties by using the opportunities offered by content analysis at a more explicit level, similar to the work of the Comparative Manifestos Project.

As seen in detail in Chapter 2, the notion of political communication in a market-oriented party perspective is adopted in order to identify the nature of political parties. Following the need for customers to become engaged 'in arguing their ideology', Lees-Marshment (2004:4) claims that parties are motivated into taking action in order to maximise support from the electorate. This argument essentially means that the design and promotion of a product are based on the idea of satisfying the needs of the customer, which will lead ultimately to its consumption. Following the way a company seeks to offer customers what they want in order to maximise the possibility that they will buy the product, this thesis applies this aspect of marketing to party politics. Details of what political marketing is, as part of a broader notion of political communication, have already been discussed in Chapter 2 so now it is time to turn to the linkage between political marketing and the radical right parties under examination. Parties have often adopted a market-oriented approach in order to contribute 'to the

disenchantment of the electorate...resulting in cynicism regarding politics in general' (Henneberg, 2005 in Moufahim, 2007:301). In addition, marketing is undertaken as an essential communication technique in politics. For Lilleker and Lees-Marshment (2005) the manifestos of the parties are developed on the basis of results of qualitative and quantitative marketing studies, which the party elites have undertaken (2005), and that political marketing appears to be the successor to ideology as the basis of party appeal. Ideology has thus transformed itself into a product created to satisfy the needs of a group and get ready to be consumed in the electoral market. The comparative element of this thesis, although based only on a small sample of specific parties, contributes to the general understanding of communication techniques.

8.4.2. The communication approach in the content of LA.O.S., SVP and AN

8.4.2.1. Evidence from the CATA

As discussed Chapter 3, which deals with methodology, text can take many forms, such as manifestos, speeches or images. Content analysis has been used here in order to determine characteristic similarities or differences that can act as indicators of communication techniques among the parties under examination. The study benefits by the analysis of examples of visual material, which are included in the parties' communication materials as well as words. This contributes to the construction of a general identity for these parties.

In the manifestos and the selected public speeches of the leader, the ideology of the party is presented along with its proposed policies. The information included in these texts is extensive and varied, and involves ideas and approaches to general issues that occupy the political agenda. As presented in the overview of the radical right family (see Chapter 2), within the last few decades and especially since the advent of the third wave of radical right parties, the political parties of this family started to engage with a variety of issues in their rhetoric, e.g. environment, in their effort to leave behind their label of 'pariah' and become mainstream political forces at a national level. This wide range of themed issues suggests images of more legitimate parties, engaging with the well-being of the citizens and addressing the main anxieties

of the mainstream voter. In comparison to the second wave of the emergence of the radical right parties in the years after the late 1980s, the third wave presented a more complete image of political parties determined to compete against established political rivals.

Having said that, the approach based on the individual principles of each party is what personalises each manifesto and each speech, as it takes on the role of being a declaration of what the political party believes and stands for and, moreover, what the party proposes as an alternative, i.e. a choice to the electorate in order to gain their vote. The logic of this thesis is related not only to the results of a content analysis of these texts, but also to the context of the manifestos and public speeches. After identifying the ideology and the proposed policies, their salience is used in order to highlight issues prioritised in the texts. This focus, on the political marketing context is the response to the needs of the electorate. The political parties exploit these needs in order to propose an appealing alternative product, ready to be consumed by the voters (see Chapter 2), and in terms of issue/policy salience the results point to the identification of the product.

The results discussed in Chapter 7 present an image of political parties that have a solid perspective of how the world should work and, additionally, they propose similar policies in order to achieve their desired result. But is there a distinguishing point between the different issues that contribute to the political agenda of a party? The issue/policy salience, analysed in the previous chapter, demonstrates that there is. A dual impression can be gained from the results of the CATA. Firstly, these results underline the priorities and tone in the rhetoric of the political parties and secondly, they provide clearer understanding of the way some issues are communicated to the public.

The qualitative semantic dimension of the texts from LA.O.S., SVP and AN (Chapters 4, 5 and 6) along with the content analysis (Chapter 7) have demonstrated that various issues have contributed to the way the parties behave towards the electorate and, additionally, have created a hint of homogeneity between the parties. This homogeneity can be identified in the figures displayed in Chapter 7, where a pattern is observable. The analysis based on the categories (Table 3:1) clearly suggests

that the parties of LA.O.S., SVP and AN are comparable, since they appear to focus on similar sets of issues e.g. ‘politics and democracy’. In order to better understand the issue-salience results, presented in Chapter 7, one has to return to the ideology and the principles upon which these parties are based.

The manifestos and speeches, used as data in this project, reflect this ideology in terms of the form in which it is presented to the electorate. This form can be classified on the basis of the proportions of significant issues contained in their texts. A clearer appreciation of the documents analysed can be obtained by reference to the two categories that differentiate themselves from the rest, in the CATA - ‘politics and democracy’ and ‘nation and national identity’ (see Chapter 7). When looking at the results of the analysis several outcomes can provide further explanation to the nature of the communication strategies adopted by the parties. Having been criticised for their anti-system stances and their references to fascist ideology (Ignazi, 1992, 2003), together with their rejection of democratic principles and forms (Carter, 2005, Schedler, 1996); for their ethnocentric stance (Rydgren, 2005), their anti-party or ‘anti-elitist appeal’ (Hainsworth, 2008), and their rhetoric which seems to pose a threat to liberal democracy (Mudde, 2004) (see Chapter 2), it seems evident that the parties would focus on ‘politics and democracy’ in order to counter such accusations and present a more democratic profile. The effort is epitomised by the creation of an image of normality, which depicts a party that is mainstream, legitimate and effective.

The high ratio of references to ‘politics and democracy’ in the documents argues in favour of this view of the position of radical right parties towards the political system, but also towards far right elements at their root. The high percentages in this category can also be evaluated in terms of the origins of the party and its policies towards the political system. As seen both in theories of the radical right (see Chapter 2), and also in the qualitative analysis of the case studies (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6) the legitimacy of these parties is often precarious, because of their radical ideals. This is especially the case for LA.O.S. and AN, since these parties have a direct link to fascist ideologies in their origins and are adopting, for the electorate, a portrait which proposes a more conventional and liberal-oriented democratic appearance.

However, the second category that distinguishes itself from the rest in terms of

importance for three cases is 'nation and national identity'. Again, the looking back the profile of the radical right family (see Chapter 2), the parties of this family favour an ethno-nationalist approach. This approach can be further observed in reference to the salience of several other categories, e.g. 'immigration', 'law and security', 'economy' and 'Europe and EU'. Elements of ethno-nationalism can be detected in all of the texts and also in the images used by the parties during electoral campaigns (a more detailed analysis of the images can be found in the next part of the chapter). Stigmatised in the past for being racist and having strong xenophobic roots, the parties, once more, adopt different ways to present and communicate their ideas and policies to the electorate. In terms of the approach of this thesis, such alternative communication techniques are evidence of how the parties market themselves.

The rhetoric on such ethno-nationalist issues rationalises the effort to reject the accusations of supporting fascism, but at the same time is also used to construct an argument against the established system, which is perceived as weak. A collective national identity and crisis of confidence in established institutions along with a racist focus on nationalism and a general mistrust of the establish party system are, *inter alia*, ideological criteria for Ignazi (1992:10) that distinguish the radical right parties. These elements can be found in the party manifestos and speeches and are evident from the content analysis reported above. The parties' identity is based on these very elements and has been communicated in their quest to gain electoral support. For Sartori (1976) 'a belief system that does not share the values of the political order within which it operates' (1976:133) is identified as an 'anti-system party'. What is clear from the content analysis is that all three parties share common features, such as anti-pluralism and antipathy towards the multi-party system, by undermining system legitimacy and by trying to foster distrust in the system, emphasising the weakness of the state (Ignazi, 1992:12).

Similarly, research on the radical right parties so far has emphasised the economic programme of such parties, often characterised as neo-liberal, for it calls for lower taxes and defends the free market (see Chapter 2), this has often been considered as one of the critical reasons that has contributed to their success (see Betz 1994; Kitschelt and McGann, 1995). It has also contributed to the wider socio-economic programmes of the radical right parties. The emphasis in the texts that were examined,

however, proposed a nation-oriented perspective on economics, something that Mudde (2007) calls ‘nativist economic’; their strong support for the idea of welfare chauvinism can also support this view. Their rejection of the political system and strong emphasis on the national element additionally linking to economic programmes and policies on development can be identified as a product in marketing terms.

8.4.2.2. Reading between the lines: the outcomes from the CATA

Lees-Marshment (2009) suggests that parties understand and respond to the public’s demands, the parties should focus on the needs and wants of the electorate, in order to achieve high electoral performances, by being in a ‘nonstop’ electoral campaign aiming to satisfy the voter and offering a customised product (Nimmo, 1999, Sparrow and Turner, 2001, Kotzaivazoglou, 2010). In this market-oriented system, the party constructs a product, taking into account their ideology and prevalent social circumstances along with voters’ reactions, and then presents the product to the electorate through communication techniques.

For Kitschelt and McGann (1995), the political and electoral support of radical right parties is influenced by the political market and competition in periodic elections. In this case, the radical right parties appear as a ‘renewal of the established order’, an alternative against corruption, scandals and ‘favouritism’ (Betz, 1993:679), proposing an ethnically and culturally homogeneous society, (Minkenberg, 1998, Georgiadou 2004). Furthermore, the increasing number of immigrants, belonging to different cultural, ethnic and religious minorities, has created a general concern in Western countries about a disappearance of their indigenous cultures. Based on the qualitative analysis in previous chapters (Chapters 4, 5 and 6) LA.O.S., SVP and AN, all managed to address widespread feelings of discontent and disenchantment, and a growing xenophobia and racism in their political cultures; to frame their messages in order to respond to the needs of the electorate, that is, perceived need for protection from immigrants and foreign influences. It is important here to mention that the parties, although they have strong anti-immigration stances (Chapter 2), in many cases they project their concerns in an indirect way, through nationalism and perceptions of devaluation of national identity and traditions.

The results of the CATA (see Chapter 7) underline the salience for radical right parties in relation to specific categories, which reflect the main characteristics of the radical right parties; 'Politics and democracy', as already mentioned above, is one of the categories along with 'nation and national identity'. Emphasis on these categories presents a specific common communicating strategy that supports a market-oriented perception in the parties under examination. The reasons that distinguish these categories are not only their high rates of saliences, but also the fact that they can be related to many of the remaining categories. The argument of this project is that by projecting these two categories as a marketing technique, the parties manage to communicate their more radical ideas on issues relating to immigration, welfare chauvinism and anti-system sentiments. In order to test this statement and present an effective outcome from the results of CATA, there is a need to return to the ideology and profile of the parties under examination (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6) and give a theoretical grounding to the results.

In addition to the need to prove their democratic credentials, the element of ethno-nationalism is one of the strongest components of the ideology of such radical right parties as LA.O.S., SVP and AN. Although the parties talk in favour of liberal democracy, the 'native' element is a key concept in their rhetoric e.g. 'Greece belongs to the Greeks', 'Swiss first' and 'Restore Italy to the Italians' (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6). In their rhetoric the parties highlight the supremacy of the nation, in terms of culture, language, traditions, values, and principles, among others, they set the alarm on any potential threat that might disturb purity of this nation. But slogans like the ones mentioned above have a dual meaning. While underlining the importance of the nation, at the same time the parties imply a cultural homogeneity based on the nation's principles and traditions, while additionally targeting the external element, i.e. immigrants, which is considered to be a threat to this homogeneity (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6).

Reflecting on the results of the analysis above (see Chapter 7), in order to protect the nation, its national identity and the cultural cohesion that characterises their countries, the parties ask for stricter measures regarding the number of the immigrants entering the country, asylum policies and citizenship for foreigners, among others. Furthermore, again in the name of maintaining the purity of the nation, stricter rules,

laws and punishments are encouraged. Regarding immigrants as sources of criminality and abuse, a harsher legal system is seen as preventing the distortion of the values and traditions of the countries. Following this feature, the rhetoric of the parties engages with the idea of naturalisation of the foreign element in the name of the protection of the nation, which could be achieved by the use of education. The parties underline the historical context and achievements of the nation throughout history and structure an additional argument for its fortification. This approach can be characterised as an ethocratic one. In an ethocracy, education would be the tool to inform, but also to preserve, the traditions and values of the country and maintain the importance of its history and culture. The need is to preserve the cultural identity that is also part of the nation's identity.

As previously discussed, despite the parties being in favour of liberal democracy (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6) there are strong authoritarian elements to be found in their rhetoric. These relate especially to proposed law and order policies which project an uncompromising attitude towards criminals (see Chapters 5 and 6) and an increase in the number of police (see Chapter 4). The protection of the law, as mentioned in the texts, is required for the protection of the 'state', and it is in the name of the 'state' that such policies are promoted.

One of the major principles, examined in the texts is the statement that power is on the hands of the people. In this sense, the parties are proposing policies that will restrict the powers of government and the political parties/elites, and will transfer the power where it belongs, to the electorate. This will work to the benefit of the people as the domination by political parties in particular, and political institutions, in general, would come to an end. Their populist approach returns political initiative to the people, mostly in the form of referendums (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6) and targets the elements of corruption and abuse of power in the established political system.

'Economy' and 'development' are two additional categories that are related to both 'politics and democracy' and 'nation and national identity'. The parties' rhetoric on economy involves a restriction of the state's intervention in the market and argues in favour of welfare chauvinism. The argument in favour of a free market underlines the need for new opportunities for business. However, LA.O.S., SVP and AN relate

their economic programmes to the principle that the economy should work in favour of the nation and the ‘natives’. In this sense there is a great mistrust of international market relations, in which are widely rejected (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6). In addition, this approach reflects the Eurosceptic sentiment that is extensively spread across the parties. Furthermore, welfare chauvinism is one of the key concepts of the radical right family. The welfare state, which originated as a social concept, transforms to a nation-oriented one. For the radical right parties, the welfare system should work only for the ‘natives’. All three parties refer to the exploitation of the welfare system by immigrants and argue against it, depicting it as a problematic chain of policies instituted by socialists (see Chapter 2). LA.O.S., SVP and AN agree on the need for a welfare system that addresses the indigenous population alone and can encompass health, employment, benefits, etc.

Finally, the salience of ‘society and values’, based on the rhetoric of the parties, is centred on the principles and traditions of the countries. Within the texts, references to these values and traditions reflect the supremacy of the nation, relate to the values of the Christian background of Western democracies, and contribute to the establishment of a general cultural identity. Bearing this in mind, the parties underline their rejection of multiculturalism, caused by the number of immigrants with different origins and backgrounds, especially those from Muslim countries. In the case of SVP the emphasis on Muslim minorities is especially located in the referendum campaigns relating to stricter asylum policies, the ban on minarets, and the deportation of criminal immigrants from the country (see Chapter 5).

The overview above relates levels of saliences, discussed in Chapter 7, to the findings of the qualitative analysis in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. The relationship between the outcomes points to the usage of ‘politics and democracy’ and ‘nation and national identity’ in relation to the rest of the categories with reference to communication strategies. For the reasons presented above, the parties create an indirect rhetoric to address important issues by highlighting the state and the nation as their main reference.

In summary, the populism of the radical right parties can be understood as ‘a corruption of democratic ideas’ (Taquieff 1995 in Mudde, 2004:541). Moving away from being a protest vote, which used to characterise the second wave of radical right

party evolution and part of the third wave (Chapter 2), for Eatwell (1998) the choice for an actual change is what motivates the voters of the radical right; anti-partism and anti-elitism can provide explanations for the support for radical right parties, along with a strong national identity (Eatwell, 1998:27). Thus, the vote for the parties, examined on this basis, is ideological in nature, which can explain, according to Moufahim, 'why other parties have attempted to regain voters by competing within the same ideological space' (2007:306). For Lin, radical right parties are using a form of focused-marketing in order to survive in the electoral market. According to this argument, parties choose a target and decide how to 'focus all [~~sie~~their] efforts' (Lin, 2004:2), an approach similar to the tactics of the target market found in commercial marketing. Following Kirchheimer (1966), the argument that mainstream parties attempt a catch-all approach, Minkenberg (2000) suggests that radical right parties attempt to target susceptible voters on the basis of a so-called 'mix' of authoritarian attitudes and traditional values, resulting from the sentiment of xenophobia, and the protection of the social privileges of such voters in the form of welfare chauvinism (Minkenberg, 2000, Lin, 2004). This is, at the same time, like projecting a mainstreamdemocratic image.

This theory appears to be relevant to the results of the CATA. The product the parties choose to offer is created under these terms, and is proposed to the electorate by using labels like 'the state' and 'the nation'. The LA.O.S., SVP and AN are signified and identified by this approach which distinguishes them from the rest of the parties in their party systems. The radical right parties under examination appear to have the capability to disguise their radical rhetoric under the recognisable principles of state and nation and in that they all follow the same pattern. Based on the findings presented above, the stated hypothesis of a common communication approach appears to be relevant. The tactics of the parties proposes evidence of a political marketing perspective. The sophisticated approach in the rhetoric of the examined texts (both manifestos and leader speeches) points to a more legitimate profile for the respective parties, making them more appealing to the electorate and, in addition, increasing the possibilities for them to be trusted by the electorate; in other words they are 'being consumed'. In addition to the content analysis, a further discussion of the images of the parties will follow in order to examine the function of image in a marketing assessment in the cases of LA.O.S., SVP and AN.

8.4.3. The communicating perspective of the image in a campaign assessment

An analysis of visual data on the basis of posters used in LA.O.S., SVP and AN election campaigns has underlined how parties have utilised marketing to improve their image and its general contribution to building the identity that they sell to the electorate (see Newman 1999b). During this image management procedure, for Newman (2001) ideology is a 'labelling process' equivalent to use of branding for products. In this case, however, voters have used ideology in order to make a connection with them. What the parties do is to persuade the electorate to deliver their product in the form of their votes. The labels then become similarly attached to the offered services, which specify 'who and what ... [the parties] stand for in the minds of the consumers' (Schweiger and Adami 1999 in Newman, 2001:6). Having said that, Newman (2001) concludes that ideology is driven less by party affiliation and more by marketing where political parties and individual candidates are defined by the images their consultants create for them (2001:6).

Nevertheless, images are a persuasive way to help people configure a better understanding of the world and in this case the identity of the political parties. According to Borgerson and Schroeder (2005), marketing representations, like images, manage to create the impression to the public that 'they know something they have no experience of, and the power to influence the experiences they have in the future' and, in addition, what they think they know 'can affect how they see, treat and understand' others (in Moufahim, 2007:306-307). Through marketing, these images, whether a portrait, a photograph or background representations, such as landscapes, are the most direct forms of communication used by the parties in order to create a believable impression which will draw the attention of the electorate. Bearing in mind that the purpose of the image is to highlight and strengthen the identity of the parties, for Alvesson (1990) the relationship between image and reality is ambiguous, and far from presenting an 'objective reality' (in Moufahim, 2007:308).

As mentioned above (see Chapter 2), the communication strategies of the political parties aim to create a bond between the party and the voter in the same way the consumer reacts in a market environment. Having said that, the electoral campaign

is something to identify with and feel part of. As Keedle underlines, the ‘campaign allows a brand to develop its personality’ (1991:179). Taking into consideration the idea of the image in an electoral campaign aims to fit in and be part of the ordinary life of the potential voter. Additionally, it works as a commodification, a vehicle to attract the voters. In order to achieve this, the images/posters are used in strategic public spaces mostly along major roads in order to be seen at times of commuting, in shopping malls, or even bus stops.



Figure 8:1: Snapshot of SVP posters in use

Considering the electoral posters campaign it is necessary to revisit the content analysis framework and media framing theory, where the focus is on the way the information is presented to the audiences. As Entman underlined, ‘to frame a communicating text or message is to promote certain facets of a ‘perceived reality’ and make them more salient in such a way that endorses a specific problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or a treatment recommendation (1993:51). In this case, media framing is incorporated with the political agenda of the parties. Reflecting on the methodology (see Chapter 2), content analysis is the best means to identify patterns and use of framing across different case studies, in order to provide a comparison.

The purpose of image management is to create an impression of reality and to motivate the sentiments of the audience in order to gain their attention and to persuade them to support the parties on the basis of an appealing identity. As presented in Chapter 5 images contained in campaign posters of SVP propose an unconcealed anti-immigrant and racist attitude, where immigrants appear as thieves, criminals, terrorists and a threat to the country's prosperity. By creating a repellent feeling towards immigrants and targeting Muslims specifically, the posters include images of minarets in the shape of missiles, women wearing veils, a black sheep between several white ones, all of which resonate with the growing fear and xenophobic aggression and making it attractive to those voters who identify with these sentiments. Similarly, in the case of AN (see Chapter 6), the image of immigrants being compared to a sinking ship, attempts to motivate the public opinion in the direction of the party's perception of immigration. Moreover, in the case of SVP, numerous photographs projecting Swiss landscapes accompany the manifestos that have been examined, along with images relating to Swiss traditions (e.g. traditional clothes, local festivals), party members associating with the public. The text in this case, along with the images, plays on the nationalism of the audience and on their fundamental attachment to the Swiss nation.

Photographs can be a critical influence on the perception of identity and reality, since photographs represent images of how someone thinks and understands something. Apart from images reflecting the political messages of the parties, there is a visual representation of the party itself, in each individual case, through the portraits of the party leaders and occasional group-member photographs. The portrait of the party is the face of the political leader, who is the most recognisable face of the party and often is thought to be identical to the image of the party. As examined earlier, the organisation of the radical right parties centralise power in the leader (see Chapter 2, 4, 5 and 6). Commenting on the role of the leader in radical right parties, Carter (2005) states that he 'exerts the kind of total control that is often essential' (2005:65), while at the same time Betz (2002) underlines that it is the internal consistency and efficient leadership which is essential for a party originating from the radical right family to become effective and develop as a strong political factor. For Bos and Van der Brug the image of the leader can affect the voters' trust in the party since

[T]he more a politician is seen as effective and the more he or she is seen as legitimate, the more likely it

is that voters will consider a vote for his or her party' 'the more a voter believes that a party leader can represent their interests, the more they will be inclined to emphasise the factors that cause them to give a higher preference to the party, or the more 'trust' a voter has in a politician, the more he or she will see eye-to-eye with him or her. (2010:781)

As a result of the increasing ability to access information about politicians and share opinions on candidate profiles, policies, image and brand, (Farrell and Webb, 2000 in Bal et al, 2010:313) perceptions based on the leaders' profiles is prioritised. Karatzaferis, Blocher and Fini act as the supreme representatives of their parties and their portraits are used as the upfront visual face of the parties. Following the theory of charismatic leadership (see Chapter 2), the party leaders play the primary role of presenting the product to the electorate in order for it to be consumed. An image of strong, responsible and reliable leadership, Karatzaferis, Blocher and Fini appear to have the necessary characteristics of a successful leader. Popular figures and representatives of political parties that endorse populism, the leaders of LA.O.S., SVP and AN succeed to contribute to the integration of the identity of the party. In addition, the role of the leader is dual: apart from delivering the message to the audience/electorate the leader becomes a portion of the message himself/herself.

One of the major points in the thesis is that there is a common pattern regarding the parties' tendency to downplay issues such as multiculturalism and immigration, which are not clearly emphasised in their manifestos and speeches (see Chapter 7); issues that come forward clearly in the parties' posters and insignia. This can be justified through the communication of the posters and images. The level of communication points out that there are differences across the manifestos and speeches, and equally different are the responses from the electorate. Although the poster campaign reflects the manifestos and the ideology of each party, the message can be characterised as more 'aggressive' and 'straightforward'. The images are going to be used as signifiers of these messages which are more likely to motivate the sentiment of the audience and ultimately attract their support. Framing analysis supports this attitude as the posters target a specific issue and manage to launch it, present the reasons for its cause, and a proposed solution to the 'problem' all at once.

8.5. Political Branding in practice

‘In a business environment, businesses use a variety of advertising strategies in order to communicate the product and brand information to customers’ (Biehal, 2007, quoted in Bal et al, 2010:314). And although, the product can be identified in manifestos and posters, the classification of the brand seems rather too vague to be determined precisely. Marsh and Fawcett (2011) link the branding image to the knowledge expectations and emotions that are projected onto the consumer, regarding the product. Along with marketing, branding is concerned with building a form of ‘equity’ for products by allowing the consumer to choose with confidence in a market place full of variety of choices (Clifton and Simmons, 1996:18), thus, creating an identity for the product (see Chapter 2). For O’Shaughnessy and Henneberg (2007), political brands combine three individual elements in which the party is the brand, the entities are the physical representations of its characteristics and, finally, the policies are the offered services (Marsh and Fawcett, 2011).

As already discussed, the idea behind the practice of political branding is the consumer and the identification of his/her needs (see Chapter 2). By acknowledging this need and by reminding us that the consumers are not steady but can change their preferences and develop new skills, the political parties organise their branding/marketing strategy in order to create a dedicated culture which provides tolerance. The aim is to create a customised product that will work as a bond between them. This relationship between the brands and the consumers is the outcome of branding management.

The evidence about using political marketing as a technique of communication from the parties of radical right created the need to identify the brands the parties used during this process, which enhances the branding management in this process. Following the theory of political branding (see Chapter 2), this thesis identifies three major potential brands: the political parties, the leadership, and the policies. These brands do not only stand individually, but also represent collectively the basis and a more holistic approach. In this sense they work as a focus for creating a party’s identity.

The documentation on the parties' identity includes their historical background and the background of the people that have effectively contributed to the creation of this identity. By understanding the origins of the political parties, we obtain a better comprehension of how they construct their marketing technique occurs. The CATA created evidence of a common communication pattern for LA.O.S., SVP and AN. The analysis of the brands and the adopted branding management of the parties enriches this argument and recognises the overall approach of the parties' efforts in making contact with the electorate. Branding is interpreted in this thesis as another tool referencing back to commercial marketing. Identifying the brand and identifying the way the brand is managed in the marketing strategy of a political party are both features that reflect the identity of the party, its ideology and its principles. The understanding of the bond between the brand and the party is dual: understanding the brand in relation to the party, but also the party in relation to the brand.

To summarise, political parties seek to create a loyalty bond between the brand and the consumers in order to gain their trust and support in the electoral market. The brand proposes a way that political messages are communicated to the consumers, and engages with methods of exploiting images and symbolism, apart from the content of the manifestos and speeches that was analysed in the chapters above (see Chapter 7).

8.5.1. The political parties

In political marketing theory (see Chapter 2), parties are viewed as brands and the point of sale is the election. For Needham (2005), 'drawing on commercial marketing analogies, an election can be seen as the moment of sale: the point of choice, where voters employ the knowledge they have about a candidate or party and make their choice' (2005:346). Bearing this in mind, it can be stated that consumers are accepting political parties as brands. In addition, by observing the product the parties offer, they are trying to understand the information and the attitudes that this product proposes and, finally, try to create a relationship with them. The brand does not only identify the party, but also creates a sense of identity for the consumers. In addition, Needham (2005) detects six features that contribute to successful brand management, this being simplicity uniqueness, reassurance, aspiration, value and credibility.

The analysis of the political parties of LA.O.S., SVP and AN (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6) argues that clear messages can be identified in the rhetoric of the parties. These often take the form of slogans and memorable quotes that reflect the parties' ideology and imply the nature of their proposed policies, e.g. 'Standing up for Switzerland', 'Hand in hand because we can', and 'Innovation and tradition- for a national alliance'. The data also reflect a secondary factor that contributes to the quality of the message and this is the direct communication of the message to the electorate and the choice of the language when communicating it. Having said that, these messages act as 'simplifiers' (see McDonald et al., 2001:340) that highlight part of information about the party, without adding additional and large amounts of information that can cause misperception and discomfort to the electorate (Needham, 2005).

The second aspect of a successful brand is its uniqueness. The parties are asked to present an alternative to existing political choices, and distinguish themselves from their political opponents. A political party's ideology can be a mixture, which draws on different ideologies and concepts. What differentiates similar ideologies from each other is often the way the brand is constructed, and what makes it unique in comparison to the similar products offered by other political parties: 'A product can be copied by a competitor; a brand is unique' (King, 1984: iii). For instance, immigration is an issue that every political party includes in their rhetoric. The aggressive approach to immigration by LA.O.S., SVP and AN, e.g. 'No', 'Stop', 'Enough', among others, is the distinctive criterion that separates these parties and provides a means of considering their uniqueness.

The reassurance from the parties' side, that by choosing their product voters will feel vindicated fosters voters' perception that their needs and wishes would be satisfied by this choice. This is crucial: the way LA.O.S., SVP and AN address this matter can be located in the rhetoric that reflects their ideology. In other words this is the way that the parties under examination incorporate their ideology in their proposed policies, e.g. stricter measures on immigration, welfare chauvinist measures, initiatives such as referendums, among others. The consistency between ideology and the proposed policies creates an effective and affective brand. By this, the consumer would be more likely to trust in and bond with the recommended brand. Also, this can be reflected in

attitudes towards political opponents and government policies that contradict their own political positions. In addition, aspiration relates to the ability of the party to convince the consumers that the product would keep their promises. The aim of the brand is to work for the benefit of its consumers and to create ideal circumstances which address the expectations of the consumers. In the cases of LA.O.S., SVP and AN, this can be achieved again through the proposed policies in the core areas of immigration, political system and economy, along with the values and the principles that the parties support, in order to create the environment desired by the consumers.

As stated in the theory of branding (see Chapter 2) the brands represent and indicate the values and principles of the company that offers it in the market. The aim of the party is to create a product and then convince the electorate to trust it and choose it among others. A consistent reference to brand values ensures that the brand is not just another alternative, but is a potential choice with depth and context. In this case, the parties of LA.O.S., SVP and AN make sure to reflect their principles and values in their rhetoric and invite the consumer to become part of it. By engaging with the consumer in their rhetoric, the parties manage to eliminate the distance between the party and the voter, and create a common sentiment of shared beliefs. The values of the parties are clearly declared in the manifestos and the leader's speeches that were examined above, and were referred to as values of the Western European world, notably democracy, freedom, equality, and Christianity. These values propose the approach of how the product is developed and what the product represents, adding credibility and validity to the brand. Finally, the building of this credibility concludes with addressing the consumers' needs and wants, in other words, the delivery of the brand's promises.

The promise of the brand is the bond feature in the evaluation of the brand [the party], to the extent that the party will be able to deliver its promise to the electorate. When it comes to the examination of political parties as brands, reliability is a key concept in order to persuade the consumer/voters that the product actually works for the benefit of the consumer. Communication plays an important role to this stage where the parties address the satisfaction of the customers in terms of retaining it. The rhetoric of LA.O.S., SVP and AN indicate this necessity by showing a stability in their attitudes, actions and commitments towards the electorate. The parties include in their

manifestos and speeches references to their actions and the achievements the parties accomplished, relating to issues and policies, e.g. call for initiatives concerning immigration, call for investigation of government expenditure.

Viewing political parties as brands requires a complex combination of ideology, policies, personalities and rhetoric. Among them one of the principal characteristics of the party as a brand is its name: L.A.O.S., the popular orthodox rally, SVP, the party for the Swiss people and AN, a national alliance. All three include in their title the core element identifying their political product. Ethno-nationalism, Christian references, national unity, fundamentals of the parties' ideology, all generate the label of a brand. With such strong labels and fulfilling the criteria of successful brands presented above, L.A.O.S., SVP and AN appear to comprehend the mentality of the commercial market and engage effectively with political branding as a key part of their marketing technique. The representations of brands in the electoral market create perception of how people perceive them, conceptualise them and respond to their messages. The parties' (L.A.O.S, SVP, AN) representations contribute to the creation of their images and identities. In short, political branding appears to be a mixture of policies, leadership and the parties themselves, along with a 'symbolic identification through logo and colour' (Dean, Croft. and Pich, 2014), in order to create an attractive image able to be make the electorate engage with it.

8.5.2. The leadership

But the party is not the only brand that can be identified in these cases. For Smith and Frence (2009) 'the leader's and party's images were more influential in attracting voters than the policies they espoused' (2009:212). Based on the theory of Max Weber where

[i]n charismatic relations people no longer obey customs or laws, instead, the followers submit to the imperious demands of a heroic figure, whose orders are legitimated not by logic, nor by the hero's place in ascribed hierarchy, but solely by the personal 'power to command' of the charismatic individual. (Weber, 1946:52)

Hence, the public figure of the leader appears to be one of the most influential

factors when it comes to attracting voters. As mentioned above, the personality of the party leader is crucial when it comes to the identity of the party, as in the face of the leader the voter sees what the party represents. Indeed, in many cases the electorate may be more familiar with the figure of the leader than with the political party itself, which is something that reflects on the structural organisation of the party – or lack of it (see Chapter 2, 4, 5 and 6).

Lack of legitimacy is one of the main criticisms that the parties of the radical right family receive. In the cases of LA.O.S., SVP and AN, the image of the party leaders can contribute to the way the party is perceived, and offers a genuine profile to the party. In this way, increasing the possibilities for attracting the attention of the electorate and gaining its trust may be enhanced. After all, the aim is to create the impression that the party leader can represent the interests of the voter. This is part of a wider perspective which suggests that voters consider political brands as a means of identifying characteristics of them in the figure of the leader.

The leader of the party is expected to be committed to its ideology, values and principles, and to manage to motivate the electorate's sentiments by addressing its expectations and desires. The rhetoric of the party is central to the rhetoric of the party's leader and represents a turning point where the person of the leader becomes the brand itself. The parties of the radical right have been characterised by their choice of strong political leaders and references to their leaders often relates to their charismatic appeal. Charismatic leadership in this case is the ability of the leader of a political party to communicate and to construct a convincing rhetoric, while addressing the interests and principles of the party.

The popularity of a political party is inevitably influenced by the popularity of its leader. In the case of the radical right parties, and more specifically in the parties of LA.O.S., SVP and AN, the public images of the parties can be seen in the faces of Karatzaferis, Blocher and Fini. This has a dual negative and positive meaning as criticism of the leaders can be transformed into a critique of the parties. Scholars of the radical right family often place the success and popularity of these parties as due to their charismatic leadership (see Chapter 2). The role of the leader in the parties, as seen above, is dominant and the electoral campaigns use the face of the leader

extensively. More specifically, the structure of the parties (see Chapter 4, 5 and 6) is effectively based on the dominant position of the leader's electoral campaigns and especially in the cases of LA.O.S. and AN, the parties are prioritising the importance of their leader by their choices of figuring the face of the leader as the main theme in their posters (see Chapter 4 and 6). The recognisable face of the party's leader, as stated above, encapsulates all the values, principles and ideology of the political parties. In the face of the brand leader, the consumer finds an element to identify with on a personal basis and all the promises made by the party have a face with which they can be associated.

The brand leader is a strong, credible and sensitive figure. Karatzaferis, Blocher and Fini contribute to the electoral success of their parties and appear to be charismatic demagogues and populist leaders, or at least catalysts for their parties' success. All three parties are often referred to as the party of Karatzaferis or Blocher or Fini, placing the personality of the leader at the top of the features which serve to identify these parties. The perception of the value of the party leader, and the level of their effectiveness in convincing the electorate of their party's worth, creates a strong brand at the disposal of the party's communication strategy.

8.5.3. The policies

The party's brand can affect the way the electorate reacts to specific policies. For the parties under examination, policies can be examined as brands, which they use in order to attract the attention of the voters. As seen previously from marketing techniques for identifying the message in the selected manifestos, speeches, and posters, the ideas and ideals the parties stand for are communicated and form the criteria by which the selection of the parties takes place. The policies spring from the ideology of the parties, and project a constructive plan for organising and running the country when in power.

The CATA results presented salience of specific themes/categories. Additionally, the rhetoric of the parties along with the analysis of the parties' posters contribute to the suggestion of a potential brand related to their policies. More specifically, policies support the underlined ideology of the party, having a direct link to it, and present a

visualisation of the way the parties understand the world, and work in order to create the desired environment based on the values they endorse. More specifically, nation and national identity can be considered one strong brand for the parties under examination, as they construct their policies around the idea of nation and national prosperity. In addition, immigration can also be recognised as one, e.g. in the case of SVP, where campaigns are organised on the basis of anti-immigration policies. In all three cases, anti-immigration policies are critical to the message they are communicating to the electorate. Looking at the results of CATA and the qualitative analysis (see Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7) understanding nation-oriented policies on immigration creates a valid argument. The brand in this case is the policy itself, in which the customers relate to sentiments of xenophobia, ethno-nationalism and racism, among others. The promise of the brand is to satisfy these needs and show they have influence on the political decision processes. Understanding policies as brands is widespread among scholars in this field. In this case, the thesis stresses the role of the policies identified as being significant on the basis of the analysis, rather than all possible policies.

For Needham (2005), brands motivate aspiration among the voters and appear to be dedicated to a commitment to a better future; brands symbolise the values of a political party and suggest explanations of why the customer should select its product instead of that of another party (see Needham, 2005:347-348). Having said that, the voters, evaluate the political parties in terms of their policies in which the voter finds the desired satisfaction in relation to the image of the ideal society. The policies would be the way to create this environment and the political party is the one to deliver it to the people. Policies as seen above provide consistency between the party's ideologies and add credibility to the product value. Policies are the guides for achieving the expected outcomes, and often characterise the identity of the party. Radical right parties are often named on the basis of their policies, e.g. anti-immigration, anti-tax, racist among others (see Chapter 2).

8.6. Observations on communicating politics: A conclusion

Political communication is an approach that stresses the features of the customer/voter and the producer/political party. The major motivation in

communication tactics lies in customer needs in addition to the satisfaction of the producers' interests (see Chapter 2). The hypothesis of this thesis is based on a general profile of communication strategies that the political parties of radical right use in order to transfer their message to the electorate. The political message in this case is examined in relation to the theory of political communication, as well as political marketing and branding, where the message offered is the product that is being introduced to the consumers in the electoral market (see Chapter 2) from a market-oriented perspective.

The thesis has presented an extensive analysis of the way the parties of LA.O.S., SVP and AN adopt political marketing and branding techniques in their communication strategies. Through a clear understanding of the needs of the electoral market, the parties have responded to the demand for a more sophisticated profile while maintaining their main principles and ideologies. The outcomes of this market-oriented perspective can be found in the constructed rhetoric and visual material of the parties by examining their ideology in terms of values, policies, images and personalities. Following the principle that political parties offer products, based on the needs of the market in a specific time period, it is necessary to determine which products are needed to satisfy the wishes of at least a part of the electorate. The parties of LA.O.S., SVP and AN have generated a common pattern of communication, thus validating the principal hypothesis of this thesis.

Although in many cases, the actual policy propositions might appear different, especially in terms of those which are selected as most significant for the parties in question, the focus of the communicating message remained the same, along with the rhetorical base of the parties (see Chapter 7). In addition, the combination of the results of the qualitative analysis of Chapters 4, 5 and 6 along with the CATA results of Chapter 7 present evidence of similar marketing techniques used by the parties and their classified brands. The perspectives on ideologies, leadership and policies of the parties under examination create a potential proposition that there is a general common profile in terms of communication strategies adopted by parties of the radical right family. This profile can be used as a guide in the examination and analysis of the radical right political parties' communication strategies. This application of such communication techniques will expand the comprehension of the adoption of political

marketing and branding techniques by parties originating from the same political family, and contribute to the identification of the nature of their uniqueness in terms of what they offer to their electorate. In addition, it will help to understand better the consumption of political ideologies in a specific period of time, relating to the third wave of the radical right parties in particular, and to classify the reactions of the political parties of the radical right based on the needs and wishes of the electorate.

The deconstruction of political ideologies, and their perception as products of market-oriented parties, presents an alternative to analysing the modern political parties and the aspects of political marketing and branding which have received increased attention within the discipline of politics which in recent years, approaches to identifying the extent of their uptake are still a work in progress. In the final chapter, there is a conclusive assessment of the findings of this thesis and its contribution to the field.

9. Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to propose an alternative approach to analysing the communication strategies of the political parties of the radical right. The concept of the adaptation of political marketing and branding as key contributors to the parties' communication strategy is central to its argument. In the following pages an outline of the thesis is presented, highlighting the key points and conclusions of the conducted research. The outline tracks the development of the thesis from the beginning, when the first questions and hypothesis were formed, followed by the literature review, the theoretical framework, the methodological propositions and the introduction to the case studies, and concluding with the empirical analysis and discussion of the main observations and findings. This leads to a statement concerning the main contribution of the thesis in relation to the methodological approach and propositions, taking into account the outcomes of the analysis. The chapter also addresses limitations of this type of work and specifies recommendations for possible future research. The chapter concludes with some general thoughts on the subject.

9.1. Responses to existing research

With strong ideological and political fluctuations in the political system (e.g. defending the free market, adopting the principles of a welfare state and populist anti-system rhetoric, while rejecting pluralism) radical right parties have managed to create a complex profile, which is both contradictory and complex. These observations are common in political parties of the radical right family in Western Europe. Indeed, it could be argued that a focus on such contradictions and complexities itself constitutes a characteristic of the radical right.

In the second chapter of the thesis, the profile of the radical right party family was presented. Despite differences that separate this political family from other political parties, there is a common approach to the construction of their political rhetoric, i.e. that of ethno-nationalism, enriched with xenophobic sentiments and ideas on chauvinism, along with the rejection of established political systems. Such rhetoric is transformed into policies regarding, for example, stricter measurements on immigration control and support for the idea of a strong nation-oriented state as a

response to the perceived threat of a multi-culturalism. In addition, the different historical, political and cultural origins of these parties are major contributors to the complexity and variety of the radical right family.

The emergence of radical right parties in Western Europe in the late 1980s created an interest within the academic community, which sought to analyse the phenomenon of the growing success of these parties across Western Europe. Parties of the radical right, which until that moment were considered as pariahs within the mainstream political system, started experiencing an increase in popularity, and gained more opportunities to express their ideas to a broader electorate. With strong elements of xenophobia, racism, ethno-nationalism anti-establishment sentiments and liberal approaches to the economy, the parties of the radical right began to build bonds with a part of the electorate. Moreover, the parties managed not only to acquire higher levels of parliamentary representation in many countries across Western Europe, but also to participate in coalition governments and occupy positions of power in several of these. This offered them extended opportunities to promote their ideology and values.

A review of literature on the radical right family revealed a lack of research on the communication strategies of this party family in relation to market-oriented approaches. The limited existing literature on the communication strategy analysis of the parties of the radical right created the motivation to look for further evidence supporting the argument about the adaptation of marketing techniques by parties of this particular political family.

Political marketing, as an understanding of communication strategies embraced by political parties, is a concept that is still expanding. The theory of marketing techniques has been developing since the early 1990s. In addition, in the same period of time, branding techniques were starting to be identified and integrated in the perspective of analysis of the communication strategies of political parties. As a new perception of analysis, political marketing provides a wider understanding of the decisions by political parties on ways to communicate their message to the electorate more effectively. Moreover, adaptation of marketing techniques supports the argument that politics has become more consumerist and such an approach provides a means of gaining essential evidence for this argument. Political marketing theory provides

thought-provoking perceptiveness on how the political parties structure their communication strategy by adapting their rhetoric.

As underlined in the introduction to the case studies of this research project despite the varied historical background of the parties, differences in political systems of the respective countries and some dissimilarities in ideologies and policies of these specific parties. As demonstrated in Chapter 8, an understanding of the political marketing techniques of these political parties has not only provided a better understanding of the parties themselves, but has also pointed to a common pattern in communication strategies among them. The results of the qualitative analysis along with the CATA as established in Chapter 7, has provided evidence of political marketing practices by LA.O.S., SVP and AN in their effort to create beneficial circumstances and attract the attention of the voters and ask for their trust in the form of their votes.

9.2. Involvement in the discussion: The contribution of the thesis

Over the years, theories and methods have been developed in political science to provide alternative approaches to the understanding of the political parties and their behaviour. A better understanding of the way the parties design their communication strategies helps to comprehend the needs and wishes of the electorate at any given time. Political marketing helps to identify the thought behind the design of the parties' communication strategy and the purposes it serves. The concept of consumption in politics places ideology in a perspective where the political parties create a buy-and-sell relationship with the electorate. The political parties have to create an attractive product and offer it to the electoral market, but at the same time they need to maintain the satisfaction levels of the consumer.

The parties of the radical right family have often been criticised for their opinions and proposed policies, but also for the level of populism they employ and their tendency to create different and often contradictory messages for different audiences. The choice of the content analysis approach, used in this thesis, is effective in terms of identifying the actual meaning of the message communicated to the electorate, but also in terms of recognising the focus placed on the content by the party.

At the beginning of this project the aim was to locate the application of political marketing techniques in the specific case of radical right parties and to test whether a common communication pattern could be observed.

The most significant element that this thesis has to offer is its contribution to a developing theory of common patterns of communication. The results of the research have identified a similar approach to rhetoric by the parties under examination similar of adopting political branding as a marketing technique. The outcomes of the analysis highlighted the focus of the communication message of the parties, while at the same time identified similarities in their strategies. The proposition of a common pattern in communication provides evidence of an analogous behaviour pattern for parties originating from the same political family and, by this means; it contributes to a better understanding of their identity and profile.

Political marketing, as noted in the thesis, is a scientific approach that is still developing, and empirical studies in the field, especially in the case of comparative approaches to political families, are yet to develop fully. The political marketing approach can provide information on the way political parties are trying build their influence on the electorate, especially in terms of guiding their perception and gaining their support. Thus, by analysing the message, the real intentions behind the communication strategies of other political parties can be revealed, as demonstrated in this thesis. The current proposition, though, of a potential pattern concerning common communication strategies of a political family, can be used to not only examine similar parties of the radical right family, but also to raise questions concerning comparable patterns in other political families, as well.

In addition, the thesis applies a content analysis approach in the examination of the manifestos and speeches of political parties as a way to deconstruct the text. Through this methodological approach any researcher who is interested can use diverted information on the content of the data.

9.3. Research limitations and propositions for further research

Nevertheless, there are some research limitations that arise from this project. The

most significant one relates to the methodological approach. As mentioned above, the methodology adopted in this thesis was based largely on qualitative content analysis in order to detect the political message of the parties under examination, and to identify their political marketing techniques. It is likely, however, that a more extensive content analysis, along with critical discourse analysis, could provide a fruitful methodological approach for identifying the application of political marketing by political parties in more depth. In addition, a comparative approach across a wider range of cases could enrich analysis of political party families and their characteristics. This would undoubtedly provide a more complete understanding of the communication strategies of the parties.

For Foucault (1972) language, as discourse, coordinates the ‘social’ word and therefore informs social practices. Discourse analysis indicates a detailed analysis of language, while its main purpose is to examine the actual use of language in context, providing a social dimension to the context. In terms of discourse analysis, then, scholars studying radical right parties would not only be able to identify, the linguistic elements in the parties documents, but also pay attention to the use of language in terms of its social, political and cultural aspects. Along with discourse, a semiotic approach on the posters and campaign material of the parties could provide more information for an extended analysis. A newly developed form of analysing visual material could provide a more appropriate technique compatible with content analysis.

Additionally, in order to understand the message it is also essential to understand the identity of the receiver, as well as that of the sender. A detailed analysis of the profile of voters of the radical right parties could contribute to the structure of the message of the political parties and, moreover, of their communication strategies. The product, after all, addresses the needs and wishes of a part of the electorate at a specific moment in time. The creation of a profile of the voters and potential voters can assist in critiquing the marketing decisions of the parties. Personal interviews with the parties’ spokespersons could also be beneficial in furthering understanding of the actual intentions behind the selection of specific marketing techniques.

A major difficulty concerning the examination of political marketing has to do with how it relates the electoral success of political parties and how this can be de-

qualified. It is difficult to find evidence for this in the existing literature, especially in terms of demonstrating that the electoral success of a political party may be due to the contribution of its communication strategies. One way to overcome this would be to undertake a combined analysis of the content, the context, the profile of the voters, which would be derived from sample surveys and the role of the media, *inter alia*, in order to provide verification for the actual impact of marketing techniques on the final decision of the voters.

Finally, there is an on-going discussion concerning contributes media exposure of the parties contributes to their success. In the past, access to the media, for radical right parties was limited for various reasons; a factor that has gradually changed in the late twenty century. The growing access to the media could be one of the reasons that contributed to the emergence and growing success of radical right parties. Evidence of the role of the media and their contribution to the increasing popularity of radical right parties can be seen extensively in the cases of LA.O.S. and AN. Having said that, media rhetoric could be analysed through a frame analysis of broadcasts and campaign videos, among others, which could help to identify parties' messages or—differences between their communication techniques in manifestos, speeches and TV programmes etc. In addition, social media play a major role in contemporary communication processes of political parties. A content and discourse analysis focused on the language of the political parties in the social media could enrich perceptions of their profile.

Taking this research forward, application of the theory of common communication strategies to other radical right families would be beneficial. In addition, adaptation of discourse analysis to the context incorporating as many variables as possible would create a complete profile of their communication strategies. Along with this, an alternative project would include an analysis of the parties' own perception and awareness of market-oriented approaches, revealing choices that contribute to the adoption of specific political marketing and branding techniques. The radical right family, especially after the emergence of its third wave, attracted the attention of many political scientists. Nevertheless, the analysis of radical right parties is still an interesting subject and could be further examined in order to gain a better understanding of the attitudes and motivations of the parties. The complexity of the radical right family, its unique rhetoric and its contradictions merit

further analysis in the field of this particular political family.

9.4. Where are they are now

Since 2010, a lot of things have changed for the parties that were used as case studies for this thesis. LA.O.S. have managed to participate in the coalition government formed in 2011, but failed to reach the necessary threshold in the national elections of 2012 to maintain its representation in the parliament. Since then, the popularity of the party has diminished and many of the party members left in order to join the conservative party of ND. SVP, in the federal elections of 2011 experienced a minor drop in its share of the vote, but still maintains its position as the strongest party in the country. In February 2014, the majority of the voters accepted a proposition for the referendum 'Against mass immigration', launched by SVP. This decision has caused several international reactions, especially coming from the European Union as it breaches the mutual agreement on the free movement of population that has been put in practice since 2007. Finally in the case of AN, the party was officially merged with PdL in 2009, but only few years afterwards, in 2013, the coalition of PdL was also dissolved.

9.5. Final thoughts

'House-trained you'll never be'. These were the exact words of the Danish Prime Minister, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, in the Danish parliament when referring to the Danish People's Party and its populist rhetoric on the issue of immigration in 1999. Just two years later, in the 2001 elections, the Danish People's Party doubled its share of seats in parliament and moved from being a pariah to taking part in the new coalition government. Having a very strong need to preserve their country's cultural identity, the radical right parties have taken an uncompromising position against immigrants living in their countries, thus making this their signature policy.

For a period of time there was an underestimation of the potential of radical right parties, but by the early twenty-first century this perspective changed. The emergence of the radical right parties in a short period of time in a wide range of countries across Western Europe, and their achievement in carving out a recognised place in their

national political arenas is remarkable. From small parties representing ghosts of the past, as in the cases of AN and SVP to becoming newly-formed parties and building rapid support from the electorate, as in the case of LA.O.S., the radical right parties managed to distinguish themselves from the rest.

The concept of consumerism dominates in the most recent analyses of political ideologies. By adopting a market-oriented perspective, political parties reestablish ways of understanding political strategies and highlight an alternative method of perceiving their communication choices. The acknowledgement of more sophisticated market-oriented strategies and the perception of a 'product' in the political context create further interpretations of how political parties comprehend the needs and wishes of the electorate and their capability to address these in order to gain the attention of the voters. However, the question remains as to whether the message that is communicated to the public is actually what reflects the party's true identity.

The original idea behind this project was to understand the notion of consumerism, and highlight the elements of political marketing and branding that could explain better the nature of political parties. Distinguishing between political ideologies, in the eyes of the electorate, has become a difficult task due to the fact that mainstream parties appear to share the many similar positions. This characteristic creates a demand for something different, a political party that could make a statement and differentiate itself from the rest. In this context political marketing and branding are being adopted in order to create an irresistible image that offers a political product that is more appealing than the others.

In this era where consumerism seems to be the most appropriate term to describe party and voter behaviour, the application of marketing techniques is a powerful tool in the development of communication strategies. The multi-dimensional interpretation of political messages is a challenge to every scholar, who seeks to identify the original message and to understand the logic behind the political marketing and branding tactics. Furthermore, to discover the true identity of the political parties of such a challenging political family, like that of the radical right, is my personal motivation for research.

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Appendix

Georgios Karatzaferis, President of L.A.O.S., Faliro September 14 2003

Why? Us Greeks, every day we see happening around us so many things, coming spontaneously, almost instinctively and we ask ' why? And we just keep thereby reducing day by day the limits of endurance and patience wondering 'For how long?' Why do we have the worst public services in Europe while we're heavier European taxpayers? Why do we have the lowest salaries in Europe while we have the highest cost of living? Why do we not have a decent pension and why MPs must only work for 4 years to retire and we have to work for 35? Why cannot we have good roads while paying tolls and vehicle taxes? Why let our children die while using drugs? Is it because schools do not educate enough our children?

Why do we not legislate our members in order to protect us from the banks and the stock exchange? Is it because our children will be unemployed since unemployment rate exceeds 20%, the highest percentage in Europe? Is it because Greece does not claim anything? (Imia , Macedonia , Cyprus , the Aegean, petroleum, Imbros Tenedos). Why should we vote for a government and opposition political parties that they do not differ at all? Why should only 50 families trample the wealth of Greeks? Why our borders should be perforated and tucked undisturbed hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants?

Why do they not announce the true cost of the Olympic Games - that 's more than triple of the original budget, in order to know about how many years the country would be mortgaged in the future? All these and even more 'Whys' come spontaneously to our mind. Is there any solution? Yes, if we bear in mind to vote with our heart for Greece. Yes, if you stop listening to the media. Yes, if you primarily feel Greek and secondly supporter of a political party. Yes, if we cease to rely on our MPs. Yes, if you believe in meritocracy displacing all those who don't.

Is there such a party? Yes. LA.O.S. Why? Because, we come from the same origins as you do. We fight like you do. We know what the poverty means as we grew up in poverty, on the sidewalk. Therefore, we know what health insurance, tax office

and obligations are, that each one of us has to pay from its income. We are one of you. You are one of us. Since, our proposed solutions are simple and feasible, similar to the same ones you have been thinking of. Because we are the only ones that dare to call things by their name, in the parliament and outside, no matter the personal cost. Since we put the interweaving across.

Because our political word touches hearts of us all and is not made out of wood like other policies. It is because we want to feel safe in our houses. It is because what we are proclaiming, we make things happen. Our words are our actions. It is because we deserve better. It is because we are proud to be descendants of Alexander the Great , Sophocles , Miltiades , Themistocles , Voulgaroktonos , Heraklion , Kolokotronis Androutsos Kosmas the Aetolian, Pavlos Melas and so many others. It is because at some point, our ancestors should be proud of their successors. It is because we are many, and they have made us believe we are the minority.

It is because when we love our country it does not mean that we are chauvinists. It is because everyone, together, hand in hand we can change Greece. It is because in the question, ‘social democrats, communists, conservatives’ we reply, Greece. They have stolen our dignity and our national pride and we want them back. It is because the labour rights are constitutional and we want healthy firms and employment, healthy agricultural production that will allow us not to import the 75 % of products consumed. It is because LA.O.S. welcomes anybody who feels, acts and thinks like Greek.

Greeks! Say: NO to illegal immigrants and their oppressors ,YES to Greeks, Greece and the Orthodox Church. NO to the U.S. and the reliance on European Union, YES to a national claims and European nations. NO to imposing reducing solutions that lead to de-Hellenization of islands and the growing Turkish domination, YES to the union with Cyprus. NO to the promiscuity of the country in domestic and imported criminals ,YES in a safe society without crime, without drugs trade , without fear and locks. NO to extremes liberalization of drug dealers, YES to capital punishment for drug dealers and rapists. No to unemployment and job cover by immigrants, Yes to a securing right to work for all Greek citizens of all ages. No to the maintain of bureaucracy and class differences over against health issues but YES to the elimination

of funds and stamps . In addition, healthcare is an obligation of the state for all Greek citizens, holding a Greek Nationality.

Enough is Enough! Greece does not deserve so much misery. We are born for the best and we can succeed while hand in hand we thrive claiming our rights. We deserve it and we claim it. We owe it to our children and our country.

Ueli Maurer, President SVP Switzerland

2007 elections? Hard work! Party program of 21 October 2006

From today, in exactly one-year time, on 21 October 2007, the federal elections will take place. These elections are important to our country. You can feel it in spite of the media and the general public that are interested in it more intensively than in the last elections. Why is this so?

In the next elections, it's all about power. The left coalition, the Social Democrats and the Greens want to win the 2007 elections. You want a Federal longer and thus the majority in the state government. And they want to deselect Blocher. Note, in addition, that the CVP representatives automatically impute your own, left camp at the United Left. The initial position to the point to say so for us: in the next 365 days to the 2007 elections it comes to the question of a left-green or a bourgeois majority in Switzerland.

Nevertheless, the Green coalition aims to gain power. Today it is in appearance a tame, moderate force of well-paid, rich, state devout companions. Mentally they are stuck in the class struggle of the last century. But still, what would happen in our country, when the left coalition becomes stronger?

Here are some examples of how a majority left-green policies would develop: The state is inflated. Say what you must but do not think. The state thinks for us and says what is good. The free citizens degenerate to manipulate mass of the state and officials. Switzerland will give up their independence, finish more international agreements and join the EU. Switzerland's gates are opened. Everyone who wants can immigrate into our country, turning the cities into ghettos. Violence and crime are packed to overflowing. The problems in schools are unsolvable. Swiss children are everywhere as the minority. Foreign cultures abound, the Swiss have to adapt even more and to be silent. In the longer term minarets complement the church towers. Naturalizations are for administrative, and it is a matter of time for Swiss citizenship to be given away. More and more citizens are connected to the infusion needle government funds. Dependent citizens strengthen management and officials. Eight new

taxes are introduced, we have to make tens of billions in new taxes. The middle class pays the piper and bleeds out. Our social institutions are being plundered: Services are expanded, the abuse is not tolerated. Nobody cares about the financing. The next generation impoverished. The health insurance premiums are unaffordable and the National Health Service is getting worse. Switzerland is distributed more tax money abroad and makes it more debt. Our farmers land on the ball mountain. The militia will be abolished and replaced by a small professional force. Our soldiers are being used somewhere in the world, but not in Switzerland. The Switzerland lands in NATO. Motorists wait in traffic jams, foreign trucks clog the road and but the trains cost billions.

Aren't these examples enough? This has to stop. Strong personalities are best suited for the left to also get hold of something from the public spotlight. Because the left does not have a program, you are fundamentally opposed to the SVP and shoots at Blocher. You want less SVP. The only thing that is sustainable at this left politics is the debt that will be taken to the next generations.

Do we really want that? Can we allow that one to destroy the values of our country wantonly? You feel it: elections are not a game or a media spectacle. Elections are something very fundamental that something extremely important. We thus determine the future of our country and point the way for the future of the next generations. Therefore, there is no reason to seat back and relax. The SVP will not remain passive. Between you and me: Sometimes I have the feeling that we are good in relaxing. Then I want you all to take a minute and take a cold shower. We are also no travel company, which is located in the charter aircraft and is looking forward to vacation at remote sandy beaches. Election means for us all endless backbreaking work. Elections called malice by the media, called disgrace of the other parties. SVP takes in purchasing, wants another Switzerland than the United Left. We will work for the electoral mandate and compete against this left claim to power. We clean with these perverse incentives on, we create order and draw boundaries where they are necessary.

What is it in this campaign we open today, a year before the elections? It is purely and simply about our Switzerland. We want to feel citizens in our Switzerland

home. We want freedom and independence, security and prosperity for all inhabitants of our country. It is gratifying that it is thanks to the SVP managed to correct in the past years, various grievances and to move business in the right direction. I think of the asylum and immigration law, European politics, finance and taxes, the health insurance law, disability insurance, etc. But many things that remain to be done. In our choice of platform, our major concerns for the next four years are listed and our goals are defined. The choice of program is not simply waste. It is a binding promise between all of our candidates, elected officials and cantonal parties and - I repeat - all, in their support. The SVP must remain the party that is reliable and takes up the unpleasant topics and represents it with all his strength. With its voice give us, voters, the specific order making it happen.

We fight for a Switzerland that gives the citizens in all areas the greatest possible amount of freedom and guaranteed. The state should shade the citizens in everyday life not everywhere and supervise bother with buses to supplement the cash and forbid rules with the thought and speech. We want to be free. With the 2007 elections paved the way for EU accession will be provided. Even if all assure you that this is currently not an issue, the EU accession spits further around in the backs of their heads the other parties. Only those who choose SVP, has a guarantee that EU membership and closer approximations to other international structures such as NATO be prevented in parliament in the coming years.

Who wants to feel at home probably needs security. Not only security on the road, but also safety at work, safety in social break-ins and security in old age. This security cannot be solved with more and more redistribution at the expense of the middle class or with more debt at the expense of future generations. We show how we want to solve with personal responsibility, a sense of proportion and reason these problems. What all goes for us at home, must also have validity for the state: Do not spend more than you earn. It is a responsible task to deal carefully and conscientiously with the control francs of voters. We will also in future have to repeatedly say NO. No benefit of our children! The only way we can preserve our prosperity and afford something in the future.

To prevent the boundless and irresponsible policies of left-green, it needs a stronger SVP. I know that we have grown massively in previous elections. Assessed objectively and pragmatically it but not enough to take anywhere to help our policy breakthrough. We must continue to grow and become stronger. Who for freedom and independence, security and prosperity, can only choose SVP that must be our message in the coming months. Ultimately, it's about our Switzerland to our identity. The self-confidence in a separate, independent Switzerland drops. The knuckle under superpowers began with the intended EEA and EU candidate and was continued with the ill-fated Solidarity Foundation. Our vouch for Switzerland and its identity is more important than before: Automated naturalization, foreign cultures and increasing violence are calling on the SVP a dauntless struggle for everything that makes our Switzerland. For Switzerland in which citizens can feel at home.

This task requires a stronger SVP. We have our choice of target therefore very, very high. But we can and still want to set. Hold on tight. The SVP wants to win a total of 100,000 new voters in the 2007 elections. This is a very ambitious goal. Therefore, I have overwritten my present thoughts in a single word, with 'hard work'. Who sets high goals, be able to rely on his team. This is our very considerable asset. Together we can achieve this goal, which is unique in the Swiss policy. It requires of us in the next 365 days everything. Use without ifs and buts for the SVP, with its two-member Federal Council. We know that in particular the Swiss target of the united left, Christoph Blocher, is compromised.

It is a noble task, which we compete. If the SVP is strengthened so that is a good thing. But it's also about much more, it's about our Switzerland and our future. No other political party has the power to stand up for this country and its identity. There remains only the SVP. We are not looking forward to the cold ashes of yesterday. Together we carry the fire of passion for our Switzerland. It does this fire of passion for our Switzerland, so in the future, it provides a home with warmth and comfort. We do not want impersonal, cold Switzerland in the European structures, the thinking and speaking diminishes us. We compete against illusions left. For our Switzerland, for our children.

Gianfranco Fini- Opening note in Manifesto 1995

A historic congress, such as the one we are going to celebrate to sanction the birth of the AN, must concern the reasons for the evolution of the MSI – its transformation, the background values of the new political entity, its doctrinal content, its strategy, its organization. In the opening session of the Central Committee of 22 October it was said that the next step would be the last congress of the Italian Social Movement, and that it would be a historic congress, because it closes the phase of the Social Movement and opens a new one, that of AN. I added, with the almost unanimous approval of the members of the Central Committee, that the real test would be represented by the coordinates cultural values and programmatic theses conference, which we now offer to the debate and approval of the members, in the assemblies sectional, and delegates to the provincial Congress. I had already stated in the report to the National Directorate of October 10 that we all have a duty to be clear and honest with us and to our members, who will be the real protagonists of the debate and choices.

Today absolve the duty to involve everyone, from the assembly of the smaller and peripheral section in the debate and choices, informing all properly, so that everyone can choose freely and rightly so. I confirm today what I said then, with the approval of an overwhelming majority of the Executive Board, namely, that they are certain, however, that this will happen, because our base, the wonderful human community that did, in half a century of sacrifice and struggle, the MSI a unique and unrepeatable protagonist of Italian political history, it is very different from what has been made for years. The MSI people are a people who think, who has the heart and brain in equal measure, which has proved to be able to sacrifice for a cause and an ideal that has very clear that the best interests of our country comes before any logic of the party.

This was indeed the highest teaching of our founders, whose name - from Almirante De Marsanich to Romualdi Michellini - are now written fully in Italian history, since they have been such major players. The MSI people, are people in love with Italy, not themselves. They are generous people and devoid of selfishness. If, as I ask the party, it's time to end the experience of the MSI because of the fact it is already

evolved and transformed, not only for electoral support in the AN, will own and only the members to decide. To which everyone will be able to pay and to whom I address myself first, even now with the certainty of finding a very large membership base.

... The birth of AN as a political movement and the final phase of the process began with the electoral cartel with which we presented to the voters in the general election and the subsequent and European confederation between multiple distinct subjects. This is an important issue, which needs explanation. AN was founded in January of this year, when the assembly of the MSI conference welcomed the proposal to introduce our candidates in the lists of the AN along with candidates coming from the civil society, the categories and also by other parties. Even then, I said clearly that ours was a strategic choice, not tactics. It was a cunning election, but the start of a precise political project. It was then that the symbol of the National Alliance was born at the bottom of the circle containing another smaller circle in which a tricolor flame figure on trapezoidal base with MSI written. At the top of the larger circle on a blue background words AN. It was then that we decided to close an era in our political history.

It was then that we proclaimed that the AN solemnly repudiated all forms of dictatorship and totalitarianism and believed in democracy and freedom as values irrepressible. It was then that we signed a commitment to support the social free-market economy in which capital is the instrument through which the work ensures social justice. It was then that the MSI -DN began its evolution into the AN, starting to speak a language of ancient and new at the same time , opening up to civil society , showing Italians with a different face compared to the recent past : the politics of alliances and no longer an alternative to the system, the reconstruction of Italy and not the demolition of the regime , the right of government and no longer the right of opposition. It was then that Italians began to believe in AN as demonstrated in March and then in June. Italians gave us their trust because they believe in our sincerity when we said that AN was not a camouflage of MSI, but the only real big news of the Second Republic , which the MSI gave an essential contribution. Today we can not go back. Today we can not disappoint those who believed in our sincerity. Let us, therefore, the official and definitive what the voters have already done : close the political history of the MSI -DN and open to AN .

...The circles today are born about two thousand and bear witness to the great power of attraction that exerts the National Alliance on civil society, and highlights the strong desire for participation that animates many of our new voters and supporters. Now it is necessary that the delegates at the Congress of the MSI can and in such form as broad as possible, be expressed in this way, expressing their support for our transformation in AN and our union with the circles of AN. This will happen naturally in due form, with the prior vote of the statutory changes needed to adapt to the new reality, the original legal and organizational structure.

And in this sense, called the statutory powers recognized in the National Congress, which the Assemblies of Section and the Federal Congress engage their elected delegates because they were called - pursuant to art. 21 of the Statute - to participate in the work of the National Congress, to proceed in such a place prior to the reform of the Statute of the necessary parts with effect from Congress to enforce already in progress) in order to determine the merger with the National Alliance and are then continued and completed the congress with the participation unit, with the right to vote and be elected, delegates expressed by the Presidents of the Working of AN. The final step of this journey will be the continuation of the extraordinary congress, attended by all the delegates of the newly formed political party, which will have the task of approving the guidelines also statutory provisions, the new political movement as well as to elect the governing bodies of power. A constitution that demonstrates the modernity of the right and its ability to overcome the party form, in direct connection with the society and to engage the best energies of the same. Under the cultural union, youth, voluntary. The thesis, though inspired by the desire to make maximum clarity on the future of the Right, however, can not be exhaustive of the many aspects that politics today assumes, nor to be regarded as unchangeable. I therefore hope that the conference will enrich the sectional and provincial to make the 'content' of a modern and successful Right, finally able to 'restore Italy Italians', which we want to be and in part we have already proved to be.